

The Liberator.

NO UNION WITH SLAVEHOLDERS. BOSTON, MARCH 4, 1859.

NO SLAVE-HUNTING IN MASSACHUSETTS—ANOTHER HEARING.

On Thursday forenoon, last week, another hearing was granted in the Representatives' Hall, by the Committee on Federal Relations, to the petitioners for the passage of a law, giving liberty and protection to every fugitive slave coming within the limits of the Commonwealth. Notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, the Hall was well filled by a deeply interested audience, whose feelings were evidently wholly with the object of the petitioners.

Outside of the Commonwealth, as well as within it, there is a great deal of interest felt as to the action of the Legislature on this subject. Onward!

SPEECH OF SAMUEL E. SEWALL, ESQ.

BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL RELATIONS, IN SUPPORT OF THE PETITION ASKING FOR A LAW TO PREVENT THE RECAPTURE OF FUGITIVE SLAVES, IN THE HALL OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1859.

PHOTOGRAPHIC REPORT BY JAS. H. W. TRENKLETON.

MR. CHAIRMAN, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE:

I regret that I was not present at the former hearing before the Committee. Although I have a very few remarks to offer, I am afraid I shall tread upon ground already occupied by other gentlemen. Yet, as I was not present, and have not been able to read what they said, I trust I shall be pardoned if, in any degree, I take up the same positions that they have. The petitions upon your table are very numerous; signed; but yet, if there had been a systematic effort to present to the Legislature, the whole extent of the feeling which is expressed in those petitions, I have no doubt the number could have been increased tenfold. Indeed, gentlemen, I believe that the whole body of the people of Massachusetts, men and women, who are capable of thinking on this subject, agree in the wish of these petitioners, and that it is only a very small and insignificant fraction of the community who oppose it.

Massachusetts has already passed a great variety of laws more or less connected with this subject. We have ancient laws against kidnapping; we have the old writ of *habeas corpus*; we have the old writ of personal *replevin*; we have new laws giving new force and vitality to both those writs; we have laws denying the use of our jails for the purpose of imprisoning fugitive slaves; laws prohibiting our magistrates and officers from taking any part in the surrender of fugitive slaves; laws prohibiting our militia from coming out to protect officers who may be carrying off fugitive slaves; we have laws giving counsel to every man who is arrested and imprisoned as a fugitive slave, and aiming to secure to him a trial by jury. Besides these, we have numerous resolutions upon the same subject. Resolutions expressing the feeling of abhorrence with which we regard slavery and the slave trade; the earnest desire of Massachusetts that slavery shall not go into any new territory, and her determination that no new slave State shall be admitted into the Union.

There is almost superstitious idolatry upon this subject—more even amongst the public, than among enlightened jurists. The public seem to think that the Courts are oracles, and that the decisions they make are sacred precedents, which must be followed. An entire mistake as to their functions, and as to the legal effect of their decisions. Do men grow wiser in a single day because they come upon the bench? Are the opinions of nine judges any better than the opinions of nine lawyers of equal skill in the law? Who will say so? Is not a book written by a learned jurist as valuable in regard to opinions, as the opinions of a Court? Why, in all nations, the volumes written by learned jurists, of the highest order, have always had a weight of authority greater than the opinions of ordinary judges, and always ought to have, because, being formed on reason and on principle, they deserve more weight. Now, it is true, that on matters of mere practice, and many other subjects, which involve no great principles of justice, and which may as well, or nearly as well, for general rules, be settled one way as another, the decisions of courts are to a great extent acquiesced in as authority in their own States. Even in regard to these classes of subjects, they are authority only to a limited extent.

Are not the decisions of Courts reversed every day by themselves? Look at the volumes of Reports that have been published. There is not one of them in this country, or in England, of twenty years standing, in which there is not more than one case that has been overruled, and in some, many cases. Judges are constantly overruling the decisions of their predecessors, and occasionally even their own. Take the early volumes of reports in Massachusetts, that are thought such sacred precedents—there is not a volume among them that has not had several cases overruled; and in the course of half a century, I venture to say many more of those cases will be overruled. The reason is this: Law is a progressive science, founded upon principle, and when the Courts make a mistake of principle, they settle nothing but the case before them; they cannot settle anything else. A question presented to a Court, which really involves a great principle, is never settled until it is settled right; and then it is not the authority of the Court that settles the question, but the rectitude of the decision, it being in conformity to reason and justice. (1)

We have greater lawyers in this country than any upon the bench of the United States Courts. Are not their opinions upon matters of law at least as valuable as those of the judges? Perhaps there were some lawyers on the United States bench as good as any there now. I recollect the names of Marshall, and Story, and Johnson on that bench. We know that the decisions of those men have been overruled by more recent judges. I do not say which decisions were the best, or which decisions are most likely to stand; but I say that the new judges overruling the

(1) We have a very striking example of the little regard which is paid to the decisions of courts as authority, in the history of the Bank of the United States. The Supreme Court of the United States had again and again decided the act establishing this court to be unconstitutional. Yet in Congress its constitutionality was questioned with the greatest vehemence and pertinacity to the last hour of its existence.

It may be well to remind those who regard legal decisions as the responses of oracles, that the earliest case on record under the Constitution, decided that the owner of a slave could not claim his return. The case I refer to is well known, but it will bear repetition. The decision was given by Judge Harrison in the Supreme Court of Vermont, in 1807. A fugitive slave had been brought before the court, and the master had made out his title as he thought satisfactorily. But Judge Harrison said that a link in the chain of title was wanting, that he had not shown a bill of sale or grant from the Almighty. The Judge on this ground discharged the slave.

other State, the owner of the slave cannot follow him, as he can other property. The right of property in an ox or a horse is recognized throughout the civilized world; and, therefore, when a man owns an ox or a horse, in one place, and the animal strays into the limits of another nation, the owner may go and take it as his property. But slavery being nothing but force, the slave is not property, except where the force controls him, and when he gets out of the reach of that force, he is free. Now, the judges of the United States Court are endeavoring to change this law, and say that slavery is a just and legal institution, and that property in slaves exists everywhere; and that if a man takes a slave into any territory of the United States, he is still a slave; that if the owner of a slave is travelling through one of the States, he may take his slave with him; and in the Lemon case which is still pending before the United States Court in some shape or other, it is no doubt the intention of some of the judges of the Court to declare that the master of those slaves had the right to take them through the State of New York, and, of course, that any slave owner might take his slaves through Massachusetts. But if there is a distinct law of the State, positively declaring that slavery cannot exist here, that, of course, interferes with any such assumed right of any slaveholder to carry his slaves through it. It is, therefore, to meet the aggressions of the Southern States, and especially of the United States Court, that I wish, and I believe the people of the State wish, that such a declaratory act should be passed. But then as regards the denial of the right to carry away fugitive slaves. We are met, at the outset, by the assertion, that the right of carrying away fugitive slaves has been established by the long practice of seventy years, since the United States Constitution was formed, and by numerous decisions of the Courts since that time; therefore, before considering the construction of the clause of the United States Constitution, and showing that we are under no such obligation, I have to examine that objection. The clause in the Constitution to which I refer is as follows: 'No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up, on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.'—Art. 4, sec. 2.

Now, the positions which I take are these: First, that the words 'person held to service,' &c., in this clause, do not imply or include a slave; second, that Congress has no power to legislate upon the subject of fugitives from service; and, third, that whatever the meaning of these words may be, even if they do include slaves, even if the clause was intended to give the power of legislation to Congress, still, that this clause is absolutely null and void as far as it concerns fugitives from bondage, because a violation of the immutable law of God, and, in that respect, it imposes no obligation whatever upon any State. These are the positions which I propose to argue, principally as legal questions, before this Committee. But, as I said, I am met at the outset by this objection, that the long practice of seventy years, under the Constitution, of the extradition of fugitive slaves, and the decisions of the Courts recognizing it as a right, do, in fact, establish it, so that it is too late now to dispute it. First, as to the practice. The length of time during which any wrong is continued can never make it right. If, on the day the Constitution was formed, it was wrong to surrender a fugitive slave, it is just as wrong, and just as illegal, now. No length of time can sanctify oppression. It is no matter how many years a nation has been under the yoke of a despot, when the nation rises and breaks its chains, the whole world applauds the deed, and admits no rights whatever in the oppressor. The slave born in South Carolina to-day, is, by right, just as free as the slave brought from Africa two centuries ago. The right is not lost in the least degree by the lapse of time; and, if, when the Constitution was framed, we were not bound by it to surrender fugitive slaves, we are not bound now to surrender them.

Next as to the decisions of the Courts. There is an almost superstitious idolatry upon this subject—more even amongst the public, than among enlightened jurists. The public seem to think that the Courts are oracles, and that the decisions they make are sacred precedents, which must be followed. An entire mistake as to their functions, and as to the legal effect of their decisions. Do men grow wiser in a single day because they come upon the bench? Are the opinions of nine judges any better than the opinions of nine lawyers of equal skill in the law? Who will say so? Is not a book written by a learned jurist as valuable in regard to opinions, as the opinions of a Court? Why, in all nations, the volumes written by learned jurists, of the highest order, have always had a weight of authority greater than the opinions of ordinary judges, and always ought to have, because, being formed on reason and on principle, they deserve more weight. Now, it is true, that on matters of mere practice, and many other subjects, which involve no great principles of justice, and which may as well, or nearly as well, for general rules, be settled one way as another, the decisions of courts are to a great extent acquiesced in as authority in their own States. Even in regard to these classes of subjects, they are authority only to a limited extent.

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opinion of the former ones, does not establish the law. The law cannot be established until it is established right. Gen. Jackson said—and it was the wisest thing he ever said—'The Constitution, as I understand it! Every State, every Congress, every Legislature, and every man, is bound by that principle. Massachusetts must take the Constitution as she understands it, and not be dictated to by the Congress of the United States, or by the United States Court. It is our duty to examine the compact for ourselves, and see what it means, and how far we are bound by it. And it is not merely the individual that is bound in conscience, but the Legislature also as much as the individual; and though Courts may sometimes compel men to yield obedience to an iniquitous decision, they cannot make it the law.

Considering this, then, as an entirely open question, just as open and fresh as it was the day when the Constitution was formed, I look at these words of the Constitution, and inquire, what do the words, 'No person held to service or labor,' mean? Do they mean a slave? Is a slave, in the eye of the law, a person held to service or labor? Is a slave a 'person'? What does the civil law say?—and the law of slavery is the same every where. Slaves are held 'pro nullis, pro mortuis, pro quadrupedibus.' Pro nullis—they are held as no persons; pro mortuis—as dead; pro quadrupedibus—as quadrupeds—horses, asses, chateaux. That is what the civil law says about slaves. The slave laws of the Southern States are precisely the same. The law of South Carolina says distinctly, they are 'chattels personal, to all intents and purposes whatsoever.' They are not persons. It is not a mere form to say, they are not persons; they can make no contracts; they cannot own or inherit property; they have no property that can descend to their heirs; they have no heirs; they have no wives; they have no children. Their wives and children do not belong to them, but to their owners. They have no right of self-defence. However violently they may be assaulted by a white man, they cannot raise a hand to protect themselves; they cannot appeal to a court of justice if they are injured. The law does not recognize them as persons. Then, when the State says they are not persons at home, shall it pretend to come to Massachusetts, and say they are persons, under the words of the Constitution?

How can slaves be 'held to service or labor under the law of any State?' Are slaves 'persons held to service,' express or implied, 'to service or labor.' A slave is under no obligation to perform any service for his master; he is driven like the ox or the horse, to his labor; and it is as absurd to talk of a slave being 'held to service or labor' as to talk of an ox or a horse being 'held to service or labor.' It cannot be; he is under no obligation. He never made any such contract. He cannot make it.

But there were two large classes of persons, at the time the Constitution was formed, to whom this clause under consideration would rightfully apply; these were apprentices, and persons known by the name of 'redemptioners'—persons who were brought over here from Europe, and, not being able to pay the expenses of their passage, bound themselves to serve for a term of years to pay those who brought them over. There were, then, at the time the Constitution was formed, actually two great classes of persons to whom the clause would apply. I have myself known of a case where the attempt was made in Boston to carry back an apprentice to Philadelphia as a fugitive from service. Happily, the movement was defeated by a writ of *habeas corpus* from our Supreme Court; but still there was no question but what apprentices came under this clause. That being the case, there are great principles of law which say, that if this clause applied to other persons than fugitive slaves, it cannot apply to fugitive slaves for that very reason. The principle of law, the universal and well recognized principle, is this:—that where the terms of any private compact, or any treaty or public compact, or any Constitution or statute whatever, can be rightfully, justly and consistently with equity and good conscience applied to one class of subjects, and can only unjustly and inequitably be applied to another class of subjects, those terms shall only apply to that class of subjects to which they can be rightfully applied. Then here is a class of subjects—apprentices and redemptioners—to whom this clause of the Constitution can be rightfully applied; and for that very reason, it cannot be applied to any other class. The principle may be stated in still more general terms,—that every compact and treaty shall be construed, if possible, so as to make it lawful and just, and not unlawful and unjust. And, therefore, when this clause of the Constitution says that 'no person held to service or labor shall be discharged from such service or labor' by the laws of another State, it means, 'no person lawfully, justly, held to service or labor'; and when it says that a State shall not interpose laws to prevent the return of such fugitive, it means when they can return him without committing a crime—when they can fairly and honestly do it.

I will take a parallel case. Suppose a contract is made by a man saying, 'I agree with A B for a compensation of \$200, to saw two cords of wood every day during the ensuing year.' That embraces in terms, you see, Sundays as well as week days. Now, the law says no man shall do any work, except of necessity, on Sundays. This contract must be construed in reference to the law; and although it says, absolutely, 'every day during the ensuing year,' the law says, 'that means every day on which he can legally saw two cords of wood, and does not include Sundays.' The construction which must be put upon the Constitution is precisely similar. It must mean those persons who are lawfully 'held to service or labor,' and who can be returned without a violation of the great principles of law and justice. This is the construction, I have no doubt, that every jurist in Europe would adopt, if the question was put to him; and that is the construction which I venture to predict, every Court in the free States will finally come to. It is the construction which the Court of Wisconsin has already come to.

truth is, that, even if the persons who drafted that clause intended to include slaves by that clumsy periphrasis, they have failed in their intention. And we have no means of knowing what the people of the United States intended, except by ascertaining the meaning of the words of the instrument. Furthermore, I would say, that Congress has no power to legislate upon the subject of fugitive slaves; that this clause gives no power whatever to Congress. It says that 'no person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor; but shall be delivered up, on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.' This compact evidently imposes an obligation upon the States to surrender 'persons held to service or labor'; and the 10th Article of Amendments to the Constitution expressly declares that all powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people. This is a power, plainly, manifestly, not given to Congress by the Constitution, and therefore it is reserved to the States. I will not, however, dwell upon this point, because the Legislature of this State has already explicitly, by its resolutions of 1855, taken this very position, in almost every word that I have used.

But there is still a further ground on which these petitioners rest their claim. Admit that this clause in the Constitution was intended to refer to slaves; admit that Congress has the power to legislate on the subject; still, they say that the compact is null and void, because a violation of the higher law of God. I am not going to appeal to authority to prove this. I ask you, gentlemen, whether any one of you would be concerned in the surrender of a fugitive slave? Does any one of you feel that this clause of the Constitution imposes an obligation upon him? Gentlemen, your hearts rebel against it, and the heart of every man in Massachusetts rebels against it. We have a law within us which tells us we cannot be bound to commit this enormity. If it were necessary, there is no end to the authorities which I could cite, to show the opinions of great men on this very subject; saying that no treaty, no compact, no statute is binding, when it calls for the commission of crime. I might cite passages without end from Cicero, from Grotius, from Vattel, from Puffendorf, from Milton, from many of the greatest names in the English law, from Fortescue down to Blackstone; I might cite cases where, again and again, statutes have been set aside because they violated this great principle, because they attempted to compel what was in its nature unjust. But I do not rest the claim of the petitioners on authority. I say that the feeling of the whole people of Massachusetts is this:—'We will have nothing to do with the surrender of fugitive slaves; we abhor the deed, and we will not do it; and we demand of the Legislature of the State to do what they can to prevent this crime from being committed, to save the State from again becoming slave-hunting ground.'

I have thought that it might be well to have some resolutions, in addition to the law, to express more distinctly the feeling of Massachusetts. I do not know that what I have written will suit all classes of the petitioners, because many who are anxious to have this law passed do not exactly agree with my construction of the Constitution, but still I believe that they are resolutions that a large part of the petitioners would like to have passed. I think that the effect of the passage of this law and of these resolutions will be, to strengthen our citizens, and to give courage to our officers and magistrates in resisting the iniquitous and unconstitutional acts of Congress.

Resolved, That the clause of the Constitution of the United States which provides that 'no person held to service or labor in one State under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor,' does not give any power to Congress, but imposes an obligation upon the States. Resolved, That all acts of Congress regulating the return of fugitives from service are usurpations, null and void. [That is no more than the Legislature has already declared.] Resolved, That if the said clause expressly provided for the rendition of fugitive slaves, the clause would be, to that extent, null and void, because a violation of the immutable and higher law of God, and would impose no obligation upon this Commonwealth as a sovereign State, or upon its citizens as individuals. Resolved, That it is the first duty of a State to protect the persons of its citizens, and all others coming within its limits and claiming its protection; and that fugitive slaves coming within this Commonwealth become subject to its laws and entitled to its protection.

What the petitioners wish is, that Massachusetts should no longer stand in the mean and shameful position she now occupies,—attempting to overrule the operation of the Fugitive Slave Law by legal subtleties, and efforts to give the slave a trial by jury, and various other devices; but that she should come forward firmly and boldly, and say, 'The soil of this State is free; no slave shall ever be taken from it.' Thus let Massachusetts, as she did in the Revolution, lead the van of the States in the cause of freedom. (Applause.)

SPEECH OF WM. LLOYD GARRISON.

MR. CHAIRMAN, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE:

I do not rise to define my position. I am an Abolitionist; and therefore for the abolition of slavery in Carolina, and for the abolition of slave-hunting in the Old Bay State, now and forever. (Applause.) When a week ago to-day, you kindly consented to give another hearing on this occasion, I took it for granted it was not because your minds were not made up on this question in the right direction, but only as an act of courtesy to the petitioners; for I mean to take it for granted, at least till I see your report, that you are on the side of humanity and justice; and that I am not looking into the faces of those who can consent to kidnaping in this State, under any circumstances, or for any considerations whatsoever.

How extraordinary is an interview like this! and how it will read in the history of the Commonwealth! that we meet here gravely to deliberate whether it will be right, or proper, or safe, or constitutional, for us to 'hide the outcast, and betray not him that wandereth!'—or whether we ought not to cooperate with slave-hunters, and reduce their victims again to bondage! 'And what man, seeing this, And having human feelings, does not blush, And hang his head to think himself a man!'—a Massachusetts man, under these circumstances? It implies great moral degradation on the part of the people of this Commonwealth, hitherto,—great inhumanity of heart,—that, for seventy years, we have allowed the slave-hunter to course with impunity over our soil, from Cape Cod to Berkshire, and every where, at Plymouth Rock, in Faneuil Hall, on Bunker Hill, to seize his poor hunted victim, and drag him back to the hell of slavery. The time past must suffice for all this. The people, thank God, have resolved that it shall come to an end. No matter what this Legislature may say or do, in the premises; if it be in opposition to the will of the people,—as those who sit in these seats are but the mere creatures of that will,—the people will 'send them to Coventry.'

When an appeal is made, at any time, any where, in behalf of justice and mercy, it carries with it every thing of argument, and rhetoric, and logic, and law; and no additional words are needed, in fact, to enforce it. If the object be just, humane, glorious, no multiplication of words can strengthen it. And this is the case presented to you in the multitudinous petitions lying on your table.

Let me say a word in regard to the petitioners as a body. I know that, in this hall, a member of your own legislative body has undertaken, in advance, to pour contempt upon them; to represent them as fanatics, incendiaries, and traitors; to identify them with the class known as radical Abolitionists. Now, gentlemen, you have but to examine these petitions to see how utterly false is such a charge. They have been signed without distinction of party, and with no reference to the Anti-Slavery movement as such. I mean that men and women have put their names to the petition, as people rush out in common to put out a conflagration which is threatening to consume the city; that there is no fanaticism in it; that the persons who have signed it are not agreed in their views in regard to the best method of attacking slavery in our country, and of effecting its ultimate abolition. On many points we are divided; but on this one point of making Massachusetts free soil to every human being planting his foot upon it, there is but one opinion among the people, and that opinion will prevail. No insult, no ridicule, no menace, on the part of any man or body of men, as against these petitioners, will avail any thing. I know the heart of the Commonwealth; I know that there are the pulsations of the people; I know that if there be one thing, more than another, which unites them at this hour, cost what it may, it is this proposition to consecrate our soil to freedom by giving protection to every hunted fugitive slave who may come to us for protection. Whenever in this Legislature shall seek to vote down the prayer of these petitioners, will have an account to settle with the people, and the people will have an account to settle with him; and none can doubt which way the balance will turn.

A member of this House, in the spirit of demagoguism, has raised the outcry, that to grant the prayer of this petition will be to come under the dictation of the Abolitionists; that the Abolitionists shall that whatever they decree is enacted by the Legislature; and you are summoned, by every feeling of self-respect and manhood, to stand your ground, and not be driven by such 'fanatical agitators.' Now, gentlemen, if this be true, that, hitherto, all that the Abolitionists have asked of the Legislature has been granted—and it is true—then one of two things is also true—either that the Abolitionists of the Commonwealth are a large majority of the people, and so it is the popular and all-prevailing sentiment of our State which is branded as fanaticism; or else that the Abolitionists, few in number, have always been so wise, so sagacious, so just, so humane, in every request they have yet made, that the people have been constrained to say 'Amen' to it. (Applause.) And this, gentlemen, is the simple fact. The Abolitionists, though held up as fanatics and madmen by priest and demagogue, have no fanaticism and no madness, either as to their object or the spirit which animates them. WE BELIEVE IN THE DECLARATION OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE; and all our fanaticism, from the beginning to this hour, has consisted in this—in meaning just what we say of, that Declaration; but, alas! the nation is hypocritical and perfidious. We believe in the inalienable rights of man, and our crime has been, that we have refused to compromise these rights to accommodate any party or sect, or to sustain any law, constitution, or compact. We shall surely be vindicated at the court of conscience and at the tribunal of God, and the verdict of posterity will be,—The Abolitionists were in the right, and the nation was in the wrong.

Let us see, gentlemen, whether there is any cause for blushing, on the part of the Legislature, that it has 'bowed to the dictation of the Abolitionists,' and done certain things at 'their command.' We first asked the Legislature to record a strong and solemn protest against the existence of slavery in the District of Columbia—act a slave State, but territory owned by the whole nation, and under the exclusive jurisdiction of Congress, and for the government of which the nation is responsible. Our petition was promptly responded to by the Legislature, and it has no need to be ashamed of its action. We asked, again, that there might be an expression of sentiment, in behalf of the State, against the interstate slave trade, which presents more than the horrors of the foreign; for there are circumstances attending it which are peculiarly distressing and revolting; and the Legislature again responded to the appeal in strong language. Is this to be ashamed of?

Next, when the daring attempt was made to override the forms of constitutional law, and transcend the powers of the national government, in order to secure the extension of slavery by the annexation of a foreign slave State to our own,—Texas,—we petitioned the Legislature to place on record the protest of Massachusetts against that lawless and wicked deed. It did so. Is it any thing to be ashamed of? Again, when South Carolina and Louisiana undertook to imprison such of our colored seamen as were found in their ports,—not only to imprison, but also in various instances to send them to the auction-block, and sell them as slaves to pay their jail fees,—we called upon the Legislature to protest against this perfidious and oppressive treatment, and to send agents to those States to seek legal redress by taking an appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States. The request was complied with—without success, gentlemen, you well know. But, surely, the Commonwealth has no reason to be ashamed of its course in this matter—only ashamed that it has been intimidated from making a fresh effort to protect the rights of our outraged colored citizens.

Again: In some sections of the State, especially in Boston, colored children were illegally excluded from the benefit of public schools, and compelled to herd together as a separate and despised caste. For a long time, the aristocracy of Boston was contumacious and defiant toward the popular feeling of the State on this point, and resolved that there should be no blending of white and colored children in the common schools of the city. We asked the Legislature to decree, in unmistakable terms, the abolition of all complexional distinctions in the schools. It did so; and in Boston, to-day, the blackest child sits quietly and honorably by the side of the whitest. Gentlemen, there is no cause for regret or shame in this act.

Again: the protest of the Legislature has been requested, and granted, against that 'bill of abominations,' the Fugitive Slave Law, the passage of which excited a thrill of horror throughout the civilized world; and also against the infamous Dred Scott decision, and the swindling Kansas and Nebraska act. What true son of Massachusetts has cause to blush at what has been done in these particulars?

The last thing we have asked, what we are now asking, is, that every fugitive slave coming to this State shall be protected, and that no person from the South may be allowed to hunt him on our soil as though he were a wild beast. All the other requests have been granted, and is this to be denied? Is there any doubt with regard to the public opinion on this subject? Do the people still rule in the Old Bay State? I take it they do; and I affirm that they are ready for this measure. They want no delay, no paltering, no dodging; but they want a decree, simple, plain, explicit, which shall protect every fugitive slave coming within our borders. I trust, gentlemen, that your report will be unanimous, and that you will bring in a bill which shall be most effectual for this purpose. (Applause.)

Gentlemen, the petition implies that Massachusetts now allows slave-hunting on her soil as constitutional. This is either true or it is not. If it be true, then the people of Massachusetts are a Commonwealth of kidnappers by constitutional agreement. Hence, every man who does not protest against the deed is to be put into the category of kidnappers. He may be a gentlemanly man, but he is a gentlemanly kidnapper.

Gentlemen, the cry of 'treason' has been raised in this hall. 'Treason!' I thought treason was something very plain, defined by the Constitution. I understand it to be an overt act—giving aid and comfort to the enemy in time of war—taking up arms against the government. It is no treason in any man to be engaged; it is loyalty to Heaven. It is only treason to the devil and all his works. (Loud applause.) I know they said, of old, when they perpetrated the crime which has shocked all generations since the event took place, and the remembrance of which will go down to the end of the world, causing a universal shudder,—I know, when they nailed Jesus to the cross between two thieves, they justified themselves by the plea, 'WE HAVE A LAW, and by that law he ought to die; his blood be on us, and on our children.' But I know that they were none the less guilty of the deed, and that their pretended regard for the law was loathsome hypocrisy and horrible impudence. I maintain that, in view of all the light we enjoy, and living as we do eighteen hundred years after those old dark days of Judaism, it is, before God, a greater crime in us to allow a slave to be carried off from the soil of Massachusetts, than it was in the Jews to allow Jesus to be crucified. We have incomparably more light; and guilt must be in proportion to the amount of light enjoyed and resisted. For myself, I would rather take my chance hereafter with those who spit the spear into the side of Jesus, than with those who, in this day, with the gospel of Christ in ear and heart, and the Declaration of Independence in the other, consent to allow a human being to be transformed into a beast, and to be carried off from our soil to stripes and bondage.

How is it, gentlemen, that latitude and longitude make such a wide moral difference respecting acts that are essentially alike? By the law of the land, you know that whoever seizes a man on the coast of Africa, and makes or helps to make him a slave, is as guilty of piracy. True, the law is now a dead letter; for it is a Slave Oligarchy that rules us; still, it remains the recorded judgment of this nation, that every one who enslaves a native-born African is guilty of piracy. Now, a man's a man for a' that. Are we then to consent to be pirates, by joining in the chase and hunting down those who come to us for safety and protection? Allow me to give you an account of the latest case of an escaped fugitive slave which has taken place in this State. I will read you the narrative, as taken down from the fugitive's own lips:— 'On the 4th of December, 1858, I received myself on board the brig William Purinton, of Boston, Capt. James L. Bryant, then lying at the wharf in Wilmington, N. C. Three days afterwards, the brig sailed for Boston. About three days out, I was discovered by the mate of the brig, who informed Capt. Bryant that a runaway slave was on board; whereupon the captain, in a great passion, swore terrible oaths at me. He threatened to blow my brains out, and to send me back to Wilmington, the first chance he could get. I had forty-five or fifty dollars in my pocket tied up round my body,—the mate searched me, and took the money from me, in the presence of the captain. I asked the captain to give it back to me, several times, but he only swore at me, and refused, and has never restored it to me. He ordered me into the booty hatch, which was filled mostly with barrels of spirits of turpentine, rosin, &c., to punish me, as I believe. I could not lie down or walk days, and could only sit upon the barrels, for several days and nights. The air was so close there, and so impregnated with the fumes of the spirits of turpentine, that I became almost entirely exhausted. I could neither stand nor walk. I told the mate I should soon die

He may be a Republican, but he is a Republican kidnapper. He may be a Democrat, but he is a Democratic kidnapper. He may be a Methodist, Unitarian, or Presbyterian kidnapper. Every man who is engaged in putting an end to this nefarious business becomes an accomplice in it, and, of course, remains in the same character. He shows that, in that direction, and to that extent, his heart has been turned to stone, and that he is willing to trample upon the law of God. If it be true that slave-hunters are permitted to roam through the Commonwealth, and seize their victims wherever they can find them, then it is time, and it is ever, but if it is not true that there is any law that allowed it so long, and there can be no valid objection in the name of the living God to say, that we will do what your parchments may be, or how many contracts you may have made to seize the fugitive, as the wanderer, the law of God is paramount over all, and your iniquitous parchments are to be given to the kept, and justice is to be maintained at all hazards. Your covenant with death shall be annulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand. If we have made any such covenant, or entered into any such agreement, shame to us that we have kept it so long! it will be to our honor and glory when we trample it beneath our feet.

I cannot, gentlemen, place the same construction upon the Constitution, respecting the rendition of fugitive slaves, which my respected friend Mr. Sewall has done. I cannot plead that it is not in the law to give up the fugitive slave. It is for those who wish to do so; for myself, I cannot outface this nation, and say, that, for seventy years, it has never understood its own Constitution in this particular. I believe that Massachusetts consented, with her eyes open, and for the sake of making a union with the South, and to allow the slave-hunter to come here, and take his prey; and I would not spend one moment in attempting to argue, on the words of the Constitution, that we have never agreed to do any such thing. I believe that the intent of a bargain is the law, whatever may be the language used, and I would not try to get rid of an obligation, however unjust, by a false interpretation of the instrument. I believe Washington, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Jay and Marshall, and all those who made the Constitution, and the people who adopted it, understood what they were about. They knew that they agreed to allow a slave representation in Congress; yet the words are not to be found in the Constitution. They intelligently and deliberately agreed that the foreign slave trade should be prosecuted for the term of twenty years, without Congressional intervention; yet they did not allow the term 'slave trade' to be inserted in the Constitution. They also understoodly agreed that slaves who should escape from their masters into other States, should be given up. 'Why, gentlemen, the Fugitive Slave Law itself, which creates such universal disgust and horror, does not contain the words runaway slave, or slaveholder, or slave-trade, in its language, it is entirely unexceptionable. By the language of the Constitution of the United States,—What a waste of time and effort it would be to argue, from the phraseology of that nefarious law, that it was never designed by Congress to refer to fugitive slaves! Enough that, for seventy years, all the Courts, all the Legislatures, all the Congresses, and all the people, have understood those compromises of the Constitution in precisely the same way, and pronounced them obligatory. It is too late, therefore, to get up a new and unwarrantable construction of the Constitution, in order to justify us in doing right and obeying God. All I have to say is, as one holding loyalty to God to be paramount in all cases, I resist through every word in the Constitution be for slavery, or every sentence an agreement on our part to stand by it. In that case, it is all null and void, and a stain of the deepest dye for us to carry it out; and I stand here on the ground of eternal justice, and of the law of the living God, and ask you to do likewise.

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there; he saw my condition; then the captain ordered me on the open deck, and forbade my going to any other part of the brig, day or night. There I recovered from the bad effects of the spirits of turpentine. I could not sleep upon deck, the weather was so cold; my feet and hands were so badly frost-bitten, that I was yet (Feb. 26th) unable to work, and under the same doctor's care.

From the day that I was discovered in the brig, the captain directed that only bread and water should be given to me. He said that was too good for me; but when the crew caught a porpoise, I was allowed some of that. I was treated in a brutal manner, both by the captain and mate. My sufferings were terrible in the booby hatch, and on the deck.

The brig put into Holmes' Hole, and lay there several days. I was obliged to keep upon the deck every day. I endeavored to get on shore while in that harbor, but could not succeed. On the evening of Dec. 26, we arrived at the outer harbor of Boston. A pilot-boat came alongside, and the captain refused to take the pilot, saying that he knew the way in. Soon after, he got aground in the Narrows. All hands were to get the brig afloat; but they could not succeed, as the tide was falling. All hands worked till midnight, and then turned in. I had worked as hard as the rest to help get the brig off, but there was no rest for me. The captain ordered me to remain on deck, work the pump, and keep her free. At daylight, I let myself down into the ship channel, and swam to Lovell's island, a distance of about two hundred feet, as near as I could judge. I then travelled over to the other side of the island, entirely out of sight of the brig;—there, in that cold morning, I kept constantly walking to and fro, to keep from freezing; for about two hours, when I spied a small sail boat, and held up my pocket handkerchief as a signal of distress. The boat heared the signal, I hailed them, and begged them to take me on board. They did so, and took me up to the city, and landed me upon Commercial wharf.

Such is the narrative. I know nothing personally of the captain or mate of that vessel, but from this representation, which I have no doubt is strictly true, they are evidently devoid of all the feelings of our common humanity; and the last thing I should wish to do would be to touch the hand of either of them. But, gentlemen, what a case is this! The victim, in unknown harbor, in the wintry month of December, throws himself overboard, at the risk of drowning or freezing, in order to effect his escape; for he well understood that he might be taken back to slavery even from Massachusetts. The question is, shall he be preferred among us; or shall we join with that captain and mate, be as inhuman and brutal as they, and send him back to the South? Massachusetts says, 'No; God forbid! Let him remain.' (Applause.)

Gentlemen, let those who raise the cry of disloyalty to the Union, in disparagement of the friends of humanity in this Commonwealth, go to the South, where they belong. They are feverishly anxious, first, that the law should be scrupulously kept, and the compact carefully observed, when fugitive slaves are to be caught; but as to the outlawry of our colored citizens at the S. U., and the ruthless violation of our own constitutional rights in that section, they have no complaint to make, no censure to bestow. Let them go and seek a residence in Georgia, or Alabama. They have no sympathy with the free spirit of Massachusetts, are perfidious to her highest interests, and approvingly see her insulted and dishonored by the entire South. I recommend one member of this House, who represents not the Commonwealth but Carolina, to lose no time in taking the cars southward; and if he is anxious to see the Constitution maintained, let him there begin the work of rebuking and exposing those who, for the vilest purposes, are ever disregarding its most sacred provisions, before raising the senseless cry of 'treason! treason!' from these seats, against those who are true to the principles of freedom.

Talk of our glorious Union! There is no Union. The free States are conquered provinces—that is all. We are living under a usurpation, bold, audacious, bloody, and the forms of government have become mockeries. There is no Union; and the man who throws up his cap and cries, 'The Union forever!' is morally in a condition to be sent to a mad-house, and have a straight-jacket put upon him. There is no Union—none, I mean, for free souls and manly hearts. There is a Union for slaveholders, slave-traders, slave-speculators, slave-hunters, and their Northern friends and allies; but none for honest, manly, freedom-loving spirits in this land. Take the late Presidential election, which proves all that I say is regard to our living under a usurpation. James Buchanan is the President of the United States! Just as legally and constitutionally so as Louis Napoleon of France. We have had no constitutional Presidential election. When, in all the slave States, the slaveholders made it perilous to the life of any man to say—I am in favor of the election of John C. Fremont—when, in all the South, it was not possible to hold a Convention in favor of Mr. Fremont, or to nominate and advocate an electoral ticket bearing his name, except at great personal hazard—when border-ruffians actually took possession of every ballot-box at the South, to secure the election of James Buchanan—was not that the overthrow of the very forms of Republican government, and the triumph of high-handed usurpation? I understand a constitutional election to be this: entire freedom of choice for all parties, without limitation, and without peril—the recognized right to hold meetings, employ speakers, and use all necessary means to operate upon public sentiment, in order to success. This was the freedom accorded to the Democratic party throughout the country. During the campaign, distinguished Southern slaveholders were everywhere at the North, at all Democratic gatherings of local importance, advocating the claims of its Presidential candidate. They found their way to Bunker Hill, into Faneuil Hall, and down to Plymouth Rock, declaiming against impartial freedom, and hotly opposing the election of Mr. Fremont; but who thought of putting them in bodily peril? Who, in all the North, among the most honest partisans of Mr. Fremont, thought of saying, 'Whoever dares to avow himself in favor of the election of James Buchanan, the candidate of the slave oligarchy, let him be lynched, or driven south of Mason and Dixon's line?' Nobody. On the Democratic side, there was liberty of speech, of locomotion, of choice, North and South, to the utmost extent. But what Republican ventured down South to advocate the claims of Mr. Fremont? Why did not Mr. Wilson, or Mr. Hale, or Mr. Seward, or any other distinguished leader or advocate of the Republican party go? Because they knew if they went, they would come back again! Is this the enjoyment of constitutional liberty?

Besides all this, even Southern men,—not Abolitionists, not hostile to slavery in spirit or purpose on Southern soil,—for simply avowing their preference for Mr. Fremont, (as in the case of Prof. Hendrick, of Virginia, and other highly respectable citizens), were compelled to seek safety in flight, and have not deemed it desirable to return to their homes and firesides, from this day. In one instance, a friend of Mr. Fremont was shot dead in the presence of his wife, and she obliged to flee for her life. Under such circumstances, this is not a constitutional government, but a bloody usurpation; and a brute-force slave oligarchy rules over us.

In a recent speech in this city, Gov. Banks intimates that, in his opinion, those who seek a dissolution of the Union are 'not of women born.' With all due deference, it seems to me, rather, that he who goes for perpetuating such a Union must be made of cast iron, and may therefore be appropriately styled 'the little iron man.' I would like to have Gov. Banks, if he dare, go to South Carolina, and simply advocate the non-extension policy of the Republican party. I would like to see him go to any part of the South, and taking the Constitution with him as his guide, and waving the American flag over his head, openly tell the slaveholders,—I am against your slave system, root and branch, and I call upon you to cease from your horrible oppression,—and then come back and tell us of his reception, and what he thinks of 'our glorious Union,' and whether he considers it the duty of any to uphold it, except those who are 'not of women born!'

Gentlemen, I know what the plea of the South is, and I admit its full force. They put our colored citizens into jail, they send them to the auction block, they drive them to unrequited toil as slaves on their plantations; and they make you and I outlaws, if we attempt to talk about freedom. Their excuse is the old one, 'Necessity—the tyrant's plea.' They say, and they truly do! We do the best we can under the circumstances. If we should permit the free colored citizens of the North to come among our slaves, they will whisper of liberty, and incite them to insurrection. We regret that we are driven to this course; we know it is illegal and unconstitutional; but we cannot maintain our slave system without it, and self-preservation is the first law of nature.' And again, with regard to the white citizens of the North who are Abolitionists, they say—'It will never do for them to come down South, and avow their anti-slavery sentiments; for if they do, they will operate upon the non-slaveholding whites, and ultimately our slaves will be taken out of our hands, and this we cannot permit.' I admit the force of their plea as slaveholders; and it shows the folly and madness of attempting to form a union between elements that can never coalesce. All the trouble between the North and the South has been to this hour, and will be to the 'bitter end,' not because of a difference of soil and climate, but because of institutions and ideas which are utterly antagonistic; because, in one part of the land, man is man, and in the other, he is reduced by another to the condition of a mere perishable piece of property. So that, when Senator Seward said in his Rochester speech, this anti-slavery movement is no fanaticism, no ebullition of transient feeling, no party device, but grows out of the nature of things—is, because it cannot help being—because the nation must be either all for freedom or all for slavery, or else there will be perpetual trouble and conflict—he recognized the simplest truth in the universe. Our fathers, in framing the Constitution, were led in their blindness to undertake to do that which it is not in the power of God to consummate,—for God cannot reconcile good and evil, light and darkness; and no power can put into the same union liberty and slavery, free men and slaves, without confusion and strife. We are driven to the wall, therefore, by the South, in regard to this subject. If we allow slaves to be hunted here, why is not slavery everywhere right? asks the South. 'If you are ready to give us your aid and support and protection in holding four millions of slaves, why not allow us to have twenty millions, if we can get them? Where is your conscience—where your morality—what are your ideas of right and wrong? What is damnable in Massachusetts, morally, must be damnable in Virginia; and you must either go against slavery everywhere, or admit that slavery is right everywhere.' Here, I say, the South has us in the argument, and drives us to the wall, because we occupy a foolish, inconsistent and criminal position.

You will be astonished, doubtless, by those who are unscrupulous in their devotion to Southern interests, that you have taken an oath to sustain the Constitution of the United States. Well, gentlemen, what is that oath? Does it bind you to give up the fugitive slave, or to consent that he shall be hunted on Massachusetts soil with impunity? If it does, put that oath under your feet, and dare not carry it out, as you regard your own souls' salvation. That oath is not binding upon you for a moment. But there is an oath which harmonizes with the law of God; which is on the side of humanity and justice; and which you have taken upon your souls to see fulfilled, as pertaining to the rights of man. It is this: ARTICLE 1. All men are born free and equal, and have certain natural, essential, and inalienable rights; among which may be reckoned the right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties; that of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property; in fine, that of seeking and obtaining their safety and happiness. The oath lies upon your souls, to-day, gentlemen, to maintain these rights. It is an oath that you can and must carry out; an oath that the people of this State are resolved shall be carried out; and if this Legislature will not do it, another one will be chosen which will assuredly stereotype public sentiment into law. I have referred to the plea of the South, that she is shut up to the terrible necessity of disregarding all her relations and agreements with us, in order to perpetuate her slave system. Now, I would have nothing done by way of vindictive retaliation; but I would say, as the very worst thing I would have done to the South, for the atrocious injustice she has done to us and our citizens,—I would say, in the language of Whittier—

'Have they wronged us? Let us then Remember how they never threaten us; Have they chained our free-born men? Let us UNCHAIN THEM!' (Applause.) And that is what the people of Massachusetts are resolved to do. Pass the law, then; but not in anger, nor by way of retaliation—no; but that Massachusetts, in this respect, may stand at least by the side of Austria;—Austria, which proclaims that the moment any slave, from any part of the world, shall touch the deck of an Austrian ship, or any part of the Austrian soil, his chains shall burst asunder, and he shall be protected against robbery or harm by the whole power of the nation. Let the old Bay State try to reach the position of Austria! If the Courts shall nullify what you may enact—it is surmised that they will, but that is to beg the question, and we ought not hastily to conclude that our judges are ravening wolves—but if they should do so, you will have done your duty. You are not responsible for the action of the Courts, and the people will settle the matter with them. Gentlemen, I conclude by saying that all opposition to this movement will be unavailing, because it is of heaven, not of men. It is the conscience of the people of the Commonwealth in insurrection against apostate wickedness. The Anti-Slavery struggle is for the freedom of man, without distinction of race or color. It is God who inspires and guides it, who bears it upward and onward; and it is impossible for Him to be overcome or vanquished. No matter who the man may be that shall try his hand against this movement, he will fall in the end. No matter what party may attempt to put it down; that party will be dashed in pieces. It is a rock; and whoever shall fall thereon shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder.'

'Tyrants! in vain ye trace the wizard ring! In vain ye limit mind's unwearied spring; What! can ye roll the winged winds asleep, Arrest the rolling world, or chain the deep? No! the wild woe contends your secret hand, It rolls not back when Canute gave command!'

LETTER FROM GEORGE THOMPSON, ESQ. It is some time since any direct intelligence has been received from our beloved but deeply afflicted friend, GEORGE THOMPSON, Esq., and therefore we have not been able to give any definite information as to the actual state of his health. But, a few days since, we received a long and highly interesting letter from Rev. SAMUEL J. MAY, of Syracuse, dated at London, giving a minute account of his interview with Mr. Thompson, with respect to his illness, situation, &c. Since that came to hand, the following letter from Mr. Thompson himself, (as dictated to his son, he being deprived of the use of his hands,) has been received; and though it was written for our special perusal, it is of such a nature, and there are so many friends of Mr. Thompson who will take the liveliest interest in reading it, that we venture to put it in print. It will be seen that Mr. T. has had a long and distressing illness, from which he is slowly recovering; and that, in consequence of it, his pecuniary resources for the support of his family have been entirely cut off. Shall one so deserving, so eloquent in the cause of freedom, so true to principle—who did so much to strike the fetters from the limbs of eight hundred thousand slaves in the British West Indies, and to electify this country in the memorable days of 1834-5, in behalf of three millions of slaves on American soil,—be allowed to suffer in this respect? It is desirable, therefore, that a liberal pecuniary testimonial should be sent to Mr. Thompson, from this country, as a token of the regard in which he is held, and of the sympathy which is felt for him and his family in his present adverse situation. Whoever, on reading the letter, may feel desirous of contributing (to however small an extent) to this object—a subscription having been already favorably started—are requested to send their donations either to ROBERT F. WALLCUT, 21 Cornhill, or to FRANCIS JACKSON, Esq., 27 Hollis street, who has kindly consented to act as Treasurer, and to forward the amount to Mr. T. with as little delay as possible.

1-Fentiman Road, South Lambeth, } London, Jan. 31, 1859. } MY DEAR GARRISON: The two most joyful events which have happened to me, since my return from India in July last, have been the receipt of your letter, and a meeting with our mutually beloved friend, SAMUEL J. MAY. If you had accompanied him, we should have composed the trio which one cold, clear, frosty morning left the door of the Marlboro' Hotel, Washington Street, in a lumbering stage-coach, for the good town of Grotton, and the hospitable roof of Dr. Earnsworth's. This was a quarter of a century ago. We were all then young men; we have now reached the grand climacteric; but, though advanced in years, we have not lost those principles behind us, which at first attracted us to each other, but have carried them with us in our journey of life, and are as much concerned for their spread and triumph, and are even more convinced of their truth and righteousness, than when we first found ourselves in the ardor of comparative youth banded together as recruits and comrades in the glorious struggle for the redemption of the bondman.

Mr. May, notwithstanding the brevity of his stay in London, found time to pay me two visits, and I found strength enough to be his guide and companion through the labyrinthine halls and corridors of the stately palace of Westminster. From our friend I obtained much valuable light on the position, prospects, and prospects of the political and non-political parties in the United States. While I was in India, I received regularly and read with eager appetite the Liberator. I am, therefore, tolerably posted up in all matters relating to the operations of the American Anti-Slavery Society.

I often think that a special Providence has watched over the prominent laborers in the field who were first to enter, now a generation ago. You yourself have a remarkable instance of God's sustaining power. Of all who gathered around you, in the early days of your Anti-Slavery career, how few have been waited upon by the angel of death! True, some have disappeared, falling from gradual decay and extreme age—a Lovejoy has sunk under the fire of assassins—a Follen has been mysteriously cut off by a fearful catastrophe—and a Shipley has gone the way of all flesh; but you, with the Chappmans, the Westons, the Quineys, the Phillipses, the Burleighs, the Fosters, the Mays, the Wallcuts, and others still living, fighting beneath the same banner, rallied by the same watchword, and struggling for the same divine object. Not less singular, nor less worthy to be recorded, has been the all but universal constancy, integrity and fidelity of those who have, from time to time, like the disciples of old, left their secular callings to bear the cross of Anti-Slavery, and to be the followers of Him whose mission it was to preach deliverance to the captive. The annals of the past do not, in my belief, furnish a more striking exemplification of steadfastness and perseverance, on the part of men and women espousing, under the influence of humane feelings and high principles, an unpopular and persecuted cause. No such fruits can be shown among the converts to any system of mere human philosophy; and those who, in their pride and prejudice, brand the abolitionists of the Garrisonian school as infidels would be much perplexed, if called upon to account for the fact, that lives like those which have illustrated the movement, of which you are the honored leader, have been formed on any other code of ethics than that which was promulgated by the great Teacher, who taught his disciples from the Mount of Judaea.

You ask me to write you about myself. The 12th of January, 1859, saw me on board a steamer, leaving Marseilles for Malta, on my way for the second time to the banks of the Ganges, on a commission of inquiry into the nature and qualities of the fibrous products of India, with a view to the importation into England of such as might be adapted to the manufacturing interest of the country. My health was then good, and I contemplated a five years' residence abroad, including a visit to China, a tour amongst the Himalayan regions of India, and a journey to Persia. Nothing could exceed the gratification I enjoyed on my way to the place of my destination. The scenery of the Mediterranean—a three days' stay at Malta, (full at the time of bustle and activity, created by the presence of thirteen thousand British troops on shore, and eighteen ships of war in the grand harbor)—a trip from Alexandria to Cairo by railway—and a seven days' detention at Suez, which enabled me to visit Joseph's well in the desert, to join an expedition to set a trap for a hyena, to go to the spot (called the Valley of Encampment) where the Israelites made their last halt before their passage of the Red Sea, and also to the well of Moses on the opposite shore, where Miriam sang her song of triumph,—these and other occupations, with the enjoyment of high spirits, and a climate than which I could conceive nothing more delicious or heavenly, filled up my time, until having got our mail, passengers, and a large amount of treasure on board, we sailed at midnight beneath the light of a full moon for the Rock of Aden, and thence via Ceylon to Calcutta. I landed at the city of palaces on the 25th of February, in time to witness the departure of Lord Dalhousie, the unscrupulous spoiler of the native Princes of India, and the author of the iniquitous Burmese war; and the installation of the present Viceroy, Lord Canning, who, I believe, a man who would much rather win laurels in fields of peaceful industry, than amidst the horrors and crimes of war. I had not been five months on shore, before I was visited by a violent attack of the liver, and was ordered a voyage to Ceylon for my recovery. I returned, and resumed my duties, and was tolerably well re-established during what was called the cold season. In the following June, my health again gave way, and again I sought, by a trip to Ceylon, to recover it; but in this hope I was disap-

pointed. Worse symptoms than any which had before appeared, and which threatened a fatal result, detained me a prisoner in the island for more than three months; during the whole of which time, I experienced an amount of hospitality and kindness at the hands of previously unknown individuals, which not only alleviated my sufferings, but saved my life. Once more I returned to Calcutta, and, trusting to the effect of the cold season, recommenced operations, and continued them until March, 1858, when, utterly broken down, and told by my doctors that nothing but the air of my native climate would raise me up again, I took passage in a steam steamer via the Cape of Good Hope for England. Hitherto, a sea voyage had always had the effect of restoring me when an invalid, but this time such was not the case. My sufferings before I reached the Cape were dreadful, while at the Cape I lost the use of my limbs by paralysis, and reached home in a perfectly helpless condition, requiring the same kind of assistance as an infant,—my food having to be conveyed to my mouth by others, and requiring to be lifted even from one chair to another. During the last six months, I have been gradually recovering; I can walk with almost my accustomed alacrity, and eat and sleep well. It is my nervous system that is now most affected, and I am incapable of bearing much excitement or mental effort. I am still deprived of the use of my hands for the purpose of writing, and send you this letter by dictation to my son. I have had many invitations to take a share in the agitation now going on, on the Reform question, but have been compelled to decline them, as it would be perilous to venture upon public speaking in my present state; besides which, I cannot dispense with the services of a male attendant, and should not like to be thrown upon the offices of strangers, as I should be, if I at present went from home.

The failure of my health has occasioned the loss of my income, as my salary has been withheld from the time I was forced to relinquish the field of my exertions, and I cannot hope for any from a new source until the re-establishment of my health permits of my entering upon some fresh sphere of labor. I am greatly cheered by the kind sympathy conveyed to me, through your letter, and the many messages of regard brought me by Mr. May. I wish it were in my power to furnish practical proof of my gratitude; but you must accept, for the present, my assurance that I cherish the strongest possible attachment to the very dear friends with whom it has so long been my privilege and honor to be united, not only by the ties of a common object, but by the most sacred bonds of friendship and affection, only equalled by my admiration of the lofty virtues and indelible courage which they have displayed in behalf of the down-trodden slave.

I must here leave off, for I am tired. My affectionate remembrances to Mrs. Garrison, to the dear friends at Weymouth, to Wendell and Mrs. Phillips, to Edmund Quincy, to Charles and Mrs. Hovey, to John T. Sargent, (whom I will shortly address a letter to, in reply to his own to me), Mr. Wallcut, S. May, Jr., and to the whole household of faith. Now and ever, your affectionate friend, GEORGE THOMPSON. WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

A STRINGENT PERSONAL LIBERTY BILL. (Correspondence of the New York Tribune.) ALBANY, Feb. 26, 1859. Mr. POWELL, from the select Committee to whom were referred the petitions for an act for the better protection of personal liberty, reported this morning a bill entitled 'An act to protect the rights and liberties of the citizens of the State of New York,' which provides as follows: Sec. 1. No person within this State shall be considered as property, or treated as such; nor shall any person within this State be deprived of liberty or property without due process of law. Sec. 2. Defines due process of law to be the usual process and forms in force by the laws of this State, and provides for a jury trial. Sec. 3. Whenever any person shall be arrested on the ground of owing service or labor to any person not an inhabitant of this State, either party may claim a jury trial, and shall have 20 peremptory challenges in addition to the challenges to which a person indicted is now entitled. Sec. 4. Every person who shall deprive or attempt to deprive any other person of his or her liberty, contrary to the provisions of the preceding sections of this act, shall be guilty of a felony, and subject to a fine of \$1,000 to \$5,000, and imprisonment from 5 to 20 years. Sec. 5. Neither descent, near or remote, from an African, whether such African is or may have been a slave or not, nor color of skin or complexion, shall disqualify any person from being or becoming a citizen of this State, nor deprive such person of the rights and privileges thereof. Sec. 6. Every person who may have been held as a slave, who shall be brought or come to this State, shall be free. Sec. 7. Every person who shall hold or attempt to hold in this State, in slavery or as a slave, any person or any free person, in any form, or for any time, however short, under the pretence that such person is or has been a slave, shall be imprisoned in the penitentiary for a term of 5 to 20 years, and fined from \$1,000 to \$10,000. Sec. 8. Any person sustaining wrong or injury by any proceeding punishable by the preceding sections of this act, may maintain an action and recover damages therefor in any Court of record of this State. Sec. 9. No person, while holding any office of honor, trust, or emolument, under the laws of this State, shall in any capacity issue any warrant or other process, or grant any certificate under or by virtue of the Fugitive Slave Bill, or shall in any capacity sever any such warrant or other process. Sec. 10. No person who shall violate any provision of this act shall be deemed to have resigned any office he may hold under the laws of this State, and shall be thereafter forever ineligible to any office of trust, honor, or emolument, under the laws of this State. Sec. 11. Any person acting as attorney or counsel for, or not, shall forfeit any office he may hold under the laws of this State, and shall be debarred from practicing in the Courts of the State. Sec. 12. Subjects any Sheriff, Deputy Sheriff, Constable, Policeman, or other State, County, City, or Town officer of this State, who shall arrest, imprison, detain, or aid in arresting or returning any person adjudged to be a fugitive slave, to imprisonment from two to ten years, and a fine from one to ten thousand dollars. Sec. 13. Requires the Governor, by and with the advice of the Senate, to appoint, in each county of the State, a Justice of the Peace, who shall be qualified to defend all persons claimed as fugitive slaves, to receive \$50 for each person so defended, to be paid by the State on the warrant of the Governor. This bill, which will be seen contains some of the more important features of the personal liberty laws of Vermont and Massachusetts, was drawn by Mr. C. S. Spencer, and the Assembly by a vote of 65 to 26, made it the special order for Wednesday next at 12 o'clock. That vote looks very well, and it is to be hoped that the 'curvature of the spine' does not prevail to such an extent as to endanger the passage of this bill through the Legislature.

DR. CURRY delivered a grand address in the Assembly Chamber last evening, in behalf of the passage of such a law as is proposed. The Chamber was well filled with attentive listeners, but it is to be regretted that but few members of the Legislature, for whose enlightenment the address was made, were present. They, however, were the losers, for the address was one of the most terse, compact, vigorous statements of the claims of freedom over slavery, to which I ever listened, and I have heard some speaking on that subject in my time. As strange as it may appear, the speech contained a number of new and strong points against the inherent wrong of slavery, and the way the State most terse, compact, vigorous statement of the claims of freedom over slavery, to which I ever listened, and I have heard some speaking on that subject in my time. 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