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THE

CHRISTIAN EXAMINER

AND

RELIGIOUS MISCELLANY.

VOLUME XL.

FOURTH SERIES, VOLUME V.

JANUARY, MARCH, MAY, 1846.

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1846.
was preached by Rev. Mr. Clarke of Boston, from 2 Corinthians iv. 13; the Ordaining Prayer was offered by Rev. Mr. Wellington of Templeton; the Charge was given by Rev. Dr. Parkman of Boston; the Right Hand of Fellowship, by Rev. Mr. Nute of Petersham; the Address to the People, by Rev. Mr. Hill of Worcester; and the other services, by Rev. Mr. Allen of Northboro', Rev. Mr. May of Leicester, and Rev. Dr. Thompson of Barre.

Rev. Thomas B. Fox, late of Newburyport, was installed as Pastor of the "Church of the Warren Street Chapel" in Boston, Mass., November 9, 1845. The Sermon was preached by Rev. Mr. Peabody of New Bedford, from 1 Corinthians xv. 14 and 20; the Prayer of Installation was offered by Rev. Dr. Pierce of Brookline; the Right Hand of Fellowship was given by Rev. Mr. Lothrop of Boston; the Address to the People, by Rev. Dr. Putnam of Roxbury; and the other services were conducted by Rev. Messrs. Huntington of Boston, and Thompson of Salem.

Dedications.—The "church of the Divine Unity," erected by the First Congregational Society in the city of New York, was consecrated by religious services, October 22, 1845. The Sermon was preached by Rev. Mr. Bellows, pastor of the church, from Ezra vi. 5 and 16; the Prayer of Consecration was offered by Rev. Dr. Kendall of Plymouth, Mass.; and the other services were conducted by Rev. Messrs. Farley of Brooklyn, N. Y., Furness of Philadelphia, Penn., and Osgood of Providence, R. I.

The meetinghouse just erected by the First Congregational Society in Bridgewater, Mass., to take the place of their former house; was dedicated November 19, 1845. The Sermon was preached by Rev. Mr. Bradford, pastor of the church, from Haggai ii. 7; the Dedicatory Prayer was offered by Rev. Mr. Richardson of Hingham; and the other services were conducted by Rev. Messrs. Briggs of Plymouth, Russell of Hingham, and Hodges of Cambridge.

The chapel of the First Unitarian Society of Troy, N. Y., was dedicated November 14, 1845. The Sermon was preached by Rev. Mr. Harrington of Albany, N. Y., from Ezekiel xlviii. 10; the Prayer of Dedication was offered by Rev. Mr. Pierpont of Troy; and the other services were performed by Rev. Messrs. Farley of Brooklyn, N. Y., Pierpont, and Harrington.

Protest against Slavery.—At a meeting of Unitarian ministers held during the anniversary week in May last, of which an account was given in the Examiner for July, a Committee was appointed to "draw up and circulate for signature among the ministers of the Unitarian body a Protest against the institution of American Slavery." Such a Protest having been prepared and transmitted to the different ministers of our denomination, has received the signatures of one hundred and seventy-three clergymen and preachers of our faith; being about two-thirds of the whole number. This Protest, which was excluded from our last number by the want of room, has been widely published in the Unitarian and other weekly journals. Still we think it too important a document, not to be placed in our record of ecclesiastical matters. Those who affixed their names to this paper, we are sure, were influenced by conscientious and Christian
motives; and those who withheld their names, we know, were con-
strained by not less urgent persuasions of duty. Imputations of other
than right purposes and sincere convictions, on either side, are un-
just, if not ungenerous. On a question of methods or measures
they who agree on principles may be permitted to differ, without
losing their confidence in one another. The Protest which we now
give has been adopted as an expression of their own sentiments by
the "Rhode Island and Massachusetts Christian Conference."

Protest against American Slavery, by one hundred and seventy-three
Unitarian Ministers.

We, the undersigned, disciples of Christ and ministers of his
Gospel, in bearing our solemn testimony against the system of
American Slavery, deem it proper in the first place to declare the
grounds of our action.

We owe it to three millions of Slaves, our fellow-men and breth-
ren, to do what we rightfully can to undo their burdens. The
wrongs of the Slave, however distant he may be, are our wrongs;
for Jesus has taught us that every sufferer whom we can relieve is
our neighbor, though a stranger, of another race, and in a distant
land.

We owe it to Slaveholders, our fellow-men and brethren, whom
we believe to be in a position hostile to the influences of Christianity,
to speak a word of warning concerning the moral evil and inhumanity
of the system with which they are connected.

We are the more obliged to bear this testimony, because the
Gospel of Christ cannot now be fully preached in the Slaveholding
States. If it could, it might be less necessary to express our views
in the present form. But violent and lawless men, as is well known,
and as recent instances in our own experience show, have made it
impossible for the Southern minister to declare the whole counsel of
God by speaking freely of that particular sin with which the commu-
nity he addresses is specially concerned. Consequently Southern
men of better character, who would not, perhaps, themselves sanction
such constraint, are nevertheless left without instruction as to their
duty in relation to Slavery. And if neither religion, nor the instincts
of humanity, nor the first principles of American liberty have taught
them that the system is wrong, their ignorance may not be wholly
their fault, but it would be ours, were we to suffer it to remain.
That they have been educated to believe that Slaveholding is right,
may be a reason why we should not severely blame them, but it is
also a reason why we should show them the truth; since the truth on
this subject must come to them, if at all, from the free States,
through books, writings, and public opinion.

These reasons would induce us to speak, even if the North were
doing nothing to uphold Slavery. But by our political, commercial
and social relations with the South, by the long silence of Northern
Christians and Churches, by the fact that Northern men, going to the
South, often become Slaveholders and apologists for Slavery, we have
given the Slaveholders reason to believe, that it is only the accident of
our position which prevents us from engaging in this system as fully
as themselves. Our silence therefore is upholding Slavery, and we
must speak against it in order not to speak in its support.

Especially do we feel that the denomination which takes for its
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motto, "Liberty, Holiness, and Love," should be foremost in opposing this system. More than others we have contended for three great principles,—individual liberty, perfect righteousness, and human brotherhood. All of these are grossly violated by the system of Slavery. We contend for mental freedom; shall we not denounce the system which fetters both mind and body? We have declared righteousness to be the essence of Christianity; shall we not oppose that system which is the sum of all wrong? We claim for all men the right of brotherhood before a universal Father; ought we not to testify against that which tramples so many of our brethren under foot?

These reasons would lead us to speak individually and separately. But our combined voices may be heard more widely and be more regarded; and we therefore speak in company. As we do not, as a denomination, combine in subscribing creeds and fixing systems of theology, the more should we be ready to unite in practical endeavors to remove moral evils. As our principles of religious liberty do not permit us to exclude our brethren who are Slaveholders from our Christian fellowship, the more should we testify against the Slave system itself. Some individuals may think they hold Slaves for the good of their bondmen, in order to give them their liberty under more favorable circumstances. We cannot regard such Slaveholders as we do those who hold their fellow-beings as property for the sake of gain or personal convenience. Leaving to God to decide on the comparative guilt or innocence of individual Slaveholders, we pronounce the system unchristian and inhuman.

And more especially do we feel bound to lift up our voices at the present time, when the South has succeeded in compromising the nation to the support of Slavery; when it has been made a great national interest, defended in our national diplomacy, and to be upheld by our national arms; when the nation has, by a new measure, solemnly assumed the guilt and responsibility of its continuance; when free Northern citizens, without any alleged crime, are thrown into Southern prisons and sold to perpetual bondage: when our attempts to appeal respectfully to the Federal Courts are treated with contumely, so that the question is no longer whether Slavery shall continue in the Southern States, but whether Freedom shall continue in any of the States. Now, therefore, when our reliance on political measures has failed, it is time to trust more fully in the power of Truth. To the schemes of party leaders, to political majorities, to the united treasures, arms, domains and interests of the nation, pledged to the extension and perpetuation of the system, let us now oppose the simple majesty and omnipotence of Truth. "For who knows not that Truth is strong,—next the Almighty?"

We, therefore, ministers of the Gospel of Truth and Love, in the name of God the universal Father, in the name of Christ the Redeemer, in the name of Humanity and Human Brotherhood, do solemnly protest against the system of Slavery as unchristian and inhuman,—Because it is a violation of the law of Right, being the sum of all unrighteousness which man can do to man, depriving him not only of his possessions but of himself. And, as in the possession of one's self are included all other possessions, and in the right to one's self are included all other rights, he who makes a man a slave commits the greatest possible robbery and the greatest possible wrong.
Because it violates the law of Love, which says, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them."

Because it degrades man, the image of God, into a thing; changes persons into property; and, by violating the dignity of the human soul, is a constant sacrilege against that soul which the Scriptures declare to be the "temple of the Holy Ghost."

Because it necessarily tends to pollute the soul of the Slave, producing all vices, and fostering habits of indolence, sensuality, falsehood, treachery, theft, moral stupor and perpetual childhood, by taking away hope, which God has appointed as the lighter of toil, the spur of exertion, and the seed of progress, and by destroying the sense of responsibility, which is the bond that connects the soul with God.

Because it tends to defile the soul of the master, as unlimited power must generally produce self-indulgence, licentiousness, cruelty, arrogance and a domineering spirit, — qualities utterly opposed to the humility, meekness and self-denial of Christ. We cheerfully admit that some, both of the Slaveholders and Slaves, have nobly resisted these influences and shown us virtues which we should be proud to imitate. But we know that the prevailing tendency of the system is nevertheless evil, and that it must always offer manifold temptations and inevitable occasions to sin.

Because this system, as the indispensable condition of its continuance, must restrict education, keep the Bible from the Slave, make life insecure in the hands of irresponsible power, deprive female innocence of protection, sanction adultery, tear children from parents and husbands from wives, violate the divine institution of families, and by hard and hopeless toil make existence a burden.

Because Slavery, as all history testifies, eats out the heart of nations, and tends every year more and more to sear the popular conscience and impair the virtue of the people. It neutralizes the influence which we ought to exert on the world as a nation whose mission it is to extend the principles of political freedom. It degrades our national character, making us appear before mankind as solemn hypocrites, who declare "that all men are equal," and yet persist in holding a portion of them as slaves, — who declare that "all are endowed with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," and yet take these rights from a sixth part of their own community. Constantly to profess one thing and constantly to practise another must destroy the sinews of national virtue.

In pure obedience to these principles, which no circumstances can obscure and no time can change, we protest against any attempt to defend this system on the ground that the Slaves are often treated kindly. It is not a question of treatment, but of right; and the greatest kindness would be no compensation for the rights which are withheld.

We protest against any attempt to defend the system from the letter of the Scriptures or from practices recorded in the Old Testament, as a libel on God and Christ, which would tend, so far as the attempt succeeded, to destroy our confidence in the Bible. If this system was not prohibited among ancient nations by positive law, it was not for the reason that it was right, but that, like polygamy and other evil practices, "it was suffered for a time because of the hardness of their hearts." And if, from the imperfect knowledge under
the old dispensation, "the times of this ignorance God winked at," yet now in the light of the Gospel, "he commands all men everywhere to repent."

Finally, while we prescribe no man's course of action, we earnestly implore all to put forth their full energy, and in the most efficient modes, to show decidedly their sympathy with the Slave, and their abhorrence of the system of oppression of which he is made the victim.

We implore our brethren at the South, especially those who hold the same faith as ourselves, to show their faith by their works; to come out from all participation in this sin, and, in the way they deem best, "to undo the heavy burden and let the oppressed go free."

We implore our brethren at the North, who may go to reside in Slaveholding regions, to go determined to make every sacrifice of profit or convenience rather than become abettors of this inhuman institution.

We implore all Christians and Christian preachers to unite in unceasing prayer to God for aid against this system, to lose no opportunity of speaking the truth and spreading light on this subject, in faith that the truth is strong enough to break every yoke. We pray them to remember those whose hearts were in this cause, who have ascended on high. If Channing, Follen, Worcester and Ware are still mindful of what is passing below, they must be looking to us to take their places and do their work. Wherefore seeing we are compassed by such witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and do the work of him who sent us, while it is day.

And we, on our part, do hereby pledge ourselves before God and our brethren, never to be weary of laboring in the cause of human rights and freedom, till Slavery be abolished and every Slave made free.

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NOTICE.

We have determined, for the present year at least, to enlarge the size of our journal, that we may give a greater variety of contents, and may the sooner publish articles which accumulate upon our hands. Each number of the present and the next volumes will therefore contain one hundred and fifty-six, instead of one hundred and forty-four pages, by which we shall make an addition of seventy-two pages to each volume. The price remains the same as before. We shall therefore feel ourselves at liberty to return to our former number of pages after this year, unless our subscription list should justify a continuance of the larger size. Our present number, it will be perceived, contains a still farther addition of four pages—160 in all—which we have given for the sake of including notices that we were unwilling to defer.