

Spokesmen or Speechless ?
The Stance Taken by
Prominent American Catholic Bishops
During the 19th Century Slavery Controversy

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Introduction

The basic views of the American Hierarchy in the Catholic Church in the 19th century concerning slavery revolved around the moral conditions of the system, not on the moral grounds for its existence. By tracing the Church's stand through Her leaders teachings from Her beginning we see how the bishops of America found themselves historically in line with their heritage. Historically, the Right Reverend Augustin Verot, was the exemplar of these views.

The thesis of this paper is that although not the most enlightened theological ideas, the thoughts expressed by Bishop Verot, were those of a majority of his fellow bishops or if not the bishops did not raise their voices in strong opposition. By examining these men, this paper can show support for its thesis and then allow for personal judgement of the individuals and the American Church as a whole in light of the history of this pivotal issue in American History.

Chapter One

The Church of Apostolic times found itself molded and founded by both the Gospel message of its founder and the traditions which permeated the human system of the Roman world. Among the institutions established was that of slavery. This human state of existence has been defined in many different ways. The American Heritage Dictionary gives the following short definition, "Bondage to a master or household."¹ It was this form that had existed once society was born centuries ago.

The early letters of Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles urged those in bondage to obey and serve worthily. (Ephesians 6:5-8) For the pre-recognized Church this teaching on morals of slavery was the only path to follow since society was built both socially and economically around slavery. Any different stance would misrepresent the true mission of the Savior politically. Thus while realizing that the Church would have to stand against the institution in the long run since it deprived some basic elements of human freedom, a slave could still find salvation in the Church and, therefore, it was more important to evangelize the slaves. When they were converted the Christian community was found to be ideally without class or status distinctions among its members.² This was based on Saint Paul's "dogmatic theology" which stated that all were equal in the eyes of God.

The Church through the early writings of the Fathers continued to echo St. Paul's exhortations. The Didache of the

mid-second century gave regulations for the parties involved, namely the master and his slaves, and again restated the fact that all were equal in the sight of God.³ With the coming into a position as the new state religion the Church brought the morals she had instilled into her followers and attempted to place them into what was understood as Roman slavery.

Prior to the adoption throughout the empire of the Christian religion (380 A.D.), although after the peace of Constantine (313 A.D.), at the Council of Gangra, a code of Canon Law was introduced whereby the teaching of slaves to hate or rebel against his master was not to be practiced and the teacher should be silenced and stricken from the community of believers.⁴ As it shall be seen when the American slave question is fully addressed this canon was used to blast away at the stands of the Abolitionists. The decree came out of both the Pauline texts and the developing stream of thought of the early Patristics.⁵ Their reasoning came out of a need of protecting the vulnerable structure of the Church to those who might misconstrue the ideas of slaves' rights as humans to that of liberating all slaves. As it is noted, the Church had to keep in mind the ways of the majority in the world if she was to survive. This train of thought continued until the structure of slavery came into a new form in the early middle ages.

However, there was one early Father, St. Gregory of Nyssa, who was to speak out against the institution of slavery.

This was truly a bold and advanced concept. It was one which was not to be learned or to bear fruit for more than ten centuries. In order to get some flavor for his ideas, the following is a selection of his sermon.

You condemn a person to slavery whose nature is free and independent, and you make laws opposed to God and contrary to His natural law. . . . For the only proper slaves of mankind are the animals devoid of intelligence. . . . How much in terms of money, is the value of intelligence? What price did you pay, in obols, (money) for the image of God? . . . You who are equal in all respects, . . . think that you can be the owner of a man?⁶

St. Gregory although he was in a minority spoke against slavery basing his condemnation on St. Paul's "dogmatic theology". Through the middle ages Church councils continued to urge the slaves to be humble and submissive because in the eyes of God all are equal and good service in your state of life was the surest way to an eternal reward. But as some of the Fathers reflected on the "dogmatic teachings" of Paul, the ultimate result was the urging and finally accomplishing of the emancipation of the slaves.⁷

The middle ages afforded the change, due to the economic shifts, to the serf system from direct slavery. This was more acceptable to the Church since the individual was now given some semblance of freedom. Now the notion of St. Augustine and other early Fathers were dealt with by the scholastics, namely that slavery was a result of sin.

Because man was in a fallen state as a result of original sin, man tended to corrupt his society. It was such that

slavery, not part of the nature of man, had come into the corrupted society as a natural institution.⁸ The Church recognizing the state of man and his society allowed those parts of society when they were regulated and there was an attempt to humanize and improve those institutions. The Church would push for manumission but not under penalty would she force this.

The enslavement of Christians by the Moslems and other enemies of the Church brought strong response from the Roman See. Yet she endorsed the enslavement of enemies of Christianity.⁹ Thus there was a differing viewpoint, depending on who was involved in the bondage.

With the new exploitation of Africa began the problem of slave trading. The Popes of the colonial exploration period condemned the enslavement of natives and later the transportation of African slaves to the New World. The first was by Eugene VI in 1434 which called for the excommunication of those who captured the natives of the Canary Islands. The Bishops of the Islands were to enforce the Bull.¹⁰ Popes Paul III, Pius V, Urban VIII, and Gregory XVI over a period of 209 years issued Bulls and Apostolic Letters supporting Eugene IV with regard to South American affairs of slavery with the Spanish.¹¹

The slave trade began in the second decade of the sixteenth century. The trading continued until finally it ended in the eighteenth century following its being banned by the

major nations of the world. In 1639, Urban VIII, as mentioned, issued the Bull which forbade Catholics to participate in the slave trade which he condemned, yet little or no heed was paid to the Bull. Thus Pius VIII, Gregory XVI, and Pius IX all issued decrees against the trade.¹²

As a matter of fact as late as 1890 Leo XIII found it necessary to show the Church's good motives although the need had passed some twenty years prior. The Church was still trying to show that she had been a supporter of the emancipation of the slaves.

In order to go into the story of the nineteenth century American Hierarchy's role in slavery, it is useful to look at the Apostolic Letter of Gregory XVI of 1839. The letter entitled "Supreme Apostolic", dealt with the slave trade and was directly addressed to South American Catholics. The Pontiff recalled the admonitions of previous Vicars of Christ in regard to the trading. The he gave his two apostolic directions. They are as follows.

Wherefore we, with apostolic authority do vehemently admonish and adjure in the Lord all believers in Christ, of whatsoever condition, that no one hereafter may dare unjustly to molest Indians, negroes, or other men of this sort; or to reduce them to slavery; or to exercise that inhuman trade by which negroes, as if they were not men, but mere animals howsoever reduced into slavery, (and)

We, indeed, with apostolic authority, do reprobate all aforesaid actions as utterly unworthy of the Christian name; and, by the same apostolic authority, do strictly prohibit and interdict that any ecclesiastic or lay person shall presume to defend the very trade in negroes as lawful under any pretext or studied excuse, 13

Many would believe that the Pope was condemning domestic slavery with his first point. However, this was in relation to the African system. Gregory XVI was quoted by Bishop John England, who as we shall see had to defend the Holy Father in his southern diocese of Charleston, South Carolina, as saying, "Though the Southern states of your Union, have had domestic slavery as an heirloom, whether they would or not, they are not engaged in the negro traffic."¹⁴ Therefore the Holy Father stated and understood the notion of a difference between slavery and the slave trade.

In the United States the result of the Pontiff's letter was the embroilment of the American Catholics in the 1840 Presidential election, linked with "Abolitionists" supporters of General Harrison (one of the candidates), the British Government, the London Worlds Convention against Slavery, the brutal O'Connell (an Irish Abolitionist), and his Holiness."¹⁵ The speaker of the above, was one John Forsyth, Secretary of State in the cabinet of Martin Van Buren. His remarks were an attempt to say that the Pope's letter had condemned slavery in the U.S. and Catholics were in conspiracy with the Abolitionists. It was aimed at southern voters during the campaign to drum up support against Tippecanoe's northern party coalition.

This speech brought out what must be considered one of the finest apologetic series of responses ever written in the history of the American Hierarchy. Dr. John England,

since his diocese was the location where the first speech by the Honorable Secretary was delivered, responded in a series of published letters, "Letters to the Honorable John Forsyth, on the Subject of Domestic Slavery". They were printed in the United States Catholic Miscellany,¹⁶ The first of the letters showed how Forsyth had mistaken his assumption of the British anti-slavery influence on the pronouncement of the Pontiff. It illustrates that the Pope followed the tradition of his predecessors. Then, in very plain language, the Bishop states that the Holy Father was not referring to domestic slavery.

The Pope neither mentions nor alludes to this latter in his apostolic letter, which is directed, as were those of his predecessors, solely and exclusively against the former.¹⁷

The remainder of the first letter exonerates the views of slave trading by Catholics from the Secretary's charges, and asks why a man of such diplomatic service would infer such an accusation. He answers his own question by stating that Catholics are simply the "shuttlecock for the parties of the republics, — threatened by the myrmidons of General Harrison's party today, and placed in a false position by Mr. Van Buren's secretary of state in the next moment."¹⁸

In the second letter, England shows again the example of those bishops who accept the Apostolic Letter and still are able to give the Sacraments to the slave holders in their dioceses. If the Pope's letter had concluded that domestic slavery was wrong and condemned it, then this would have

been impossible. No less than the Archbishop of Baltimore and six of his suffragan bishops were southern slave territory bishops.¹⁹ He also restated earlier philosophers and what they had concluded concerning the fact that natural law did not prohibit slavery. He states St. Thomas's following passages.

The common possession of all things is said to be the natural law, because the distinction of possessions and slavery were not introduced by nature, but by the reason of man, for the benefit of human life; and thus the law of nature is not changed by their introduction, but an addition is made thereto.²⁰

Future prelates would again bring up the fact of natural law in the defense of the Christian stand on slavery. To that they would always attach the scriptural and Apostolic teachings in the tradition of the Church.

In all Bishop England wrote eighteen letters which detailed his defense of the Church and her spiritual leaders' views on slavery. The Bishop's death cut short the total number of letters when it occurred in April of 1842. Such fine scholarly work had been done by the late Bishop that the Miscellany gave the following message after his death, "Any commendation of these 'Letters on the Slave Trade' of our late lamented prelated would be entirely superfluous."²¹

At the same time Bishop England was writing in defense of Pope Gregory XVI, the first definitive theological work was published by a Catholic scholar in the United States. It included a section on the domestic slavery question and

also the slave trade. Francis Patrick Kenrick, then Bishop of Philadelphia, authored this much-needed work for American ecclesiastical students and the clergy in general. The title of the work was Theologia Moralis, and it came out in a second edition later in 1861, although the first was published in 1840.²³

Kenrick defines slavery as "the state of perpetual subjugation by which one is held to give his labors to another in return for his maintenance."²⁴ He treats slavery by tracing the Thomistic tradition of reasoning about slavery. The view held by the Church was that a master had the right to the slaves labor only. In exchange for the slave giving his service, the master was to provide for the well being of the slave. This view was stressed by Kenrick. The freedom of the slave was forfeited only if the reason for the bondage was just. The form of the system was to be Christian in its nature. Spiritually the slaves retained the rights of all men in regard to their relation with their creator.²⁵

The slave trade was immoral to Kenrick and not a just reason for establishing bondage. As we shall see, just reasons for slavery will be spelled out by Bishop Augustin Verot in the following chapter. In regard to the slaves already in captivity, these he laments in so far as they are products of the slave trade.²⁶ Yet due to years of bondage and the welfare of the society, their freedom might be delayed. It was as the Bishop saw it a "perpetual and univeral right" of the

master to be expected from the servant.²⁷ The Bishop said laws of the land should be obeyed and therefore slavery was to be accepted, with both civil law and the theological position of the Church ratifying this course of action.²⁸

Thus Kenrick was seen as the guiding light in these principles by the clergy of the time. His work, as we will see, is the backdrop to future sermons and work by the Hierarchy. His is one part of the combination with Bishop England's letters in the early statement of the Church in America on slavery. Only one other area is needed to be examined in regard to mid-century opinions from the bishops on this subject. That area is the provincial councils and the Plenary Council of 1852, all of which took place in Baltimore.

The provincial councils, the first of which was held in 1829, brought together the Archbishop of Baltimore and his suffragan bishops to discuss the business of the American Church. New dioceses were often suggested to Rome as a result of these meetings. However, nothing was said in regard to slavery until the Fourth Provincial Council in 1840. When it opened in the spring, the majority of the bishops attending were from slave states. The Apostolic Letter of Gregory XVI, published in that same year, was read at the solemn Second Public Session at its close.²⁹ It was well received, as John England later argued in his letters to Forsyth. The letter of the Holy Father allowed some of the hierarchy to clarify the Church's stand concerning the slave trade and slavery, England

and Kenrick were the most prominent to express their views.³⁰

In the following councils little or nothing was said as the bishops avoided the issue which might have caused sectionalism among their numbers and also might have given political controversy at a time when the Church was already suffering persecution by political parties. The First Plenary Council of 1852, which was a national council since by this time more than one metropolitan province had been established, seemed to be a time when the prelates from north and south could discuss the issue. But because of traditional standing by the Church and the separating of the system and the trade firmly rooted in the prelates' minds, the subject was kept under the rug. It is also well to note that by this time the question had become most intense and complex in the national political arena. So the bishops simply settled on leaving the volatile question undisturbed and thereby preserved unity needed to accomplish the role and work of the Church in the nation.³¹

The prelates wished to continue their separation from Abolitionists and to have their flocks seen as good American citizens who obeyed the law. The Pastoral published in the same year of the Council urged the obeying of the Government's civil codes in the following exhortations.

Obey the public authorities, not only for wrath but for conscience sake. Show your attachment to the institutions of our beloved country by prompt compliance with all their requirements, . . . Thus will you refute

babbling of foolish men, and best approve
yourselves worthy of the privileges which
you enjoy, 32

Thus we see how the early American Hierarchy only defended the Church and her Chief Shepherd in regard to slavery. They were not vocal political participants in the controversy save apologetics. In the next chapter we will encounter the most articulate defense of the Slave System by an American bishop. The southern prelate preached this famed sermon just prior to the great civil war, yet in many ways the stage for his work was set and thus he reflected the works of England and Kenrick. Therefore, we continue to trace and show the rôle of the episcopacy through the examples of prominent prelates with regard to our topic.

Chapter Two

The first American prelate to speak out publicly on an important political issue of national concern since the establishment of the episcopal see of Baltimore in 1791 was the Right Reverend Augustin Verot, Vicar Apostolic of Florida.³³ This occurred on 4 January, 1861, in the oldest parish in the United States located at St. Augustine. The occasion was a national day of public humiliation, fasting, and prayer called for by President James Buchanan.³⁴ To the Bishop this seemed the fitting day to address the problem which threatened to cause the Union to split itself asunder. The topic of the pastoral discourse was slavery.

The prelate based the sermon on the fourteenth chapter, verse nine, of the Book of Proverbs: "Justice exalteth a nation, but sin maketh nations miserable."³⁵ The opening remarks allowed Verot to comment on reflections of Augustine of Hippo's Of the City of God. Verot used this work to explain the scriptural passage he had put forth as the corner stone of his talk.

That illustrious Doctor does not hesitate to say, that this temporal prosperity of the Empire was the reward of the moral virtues which illustrated the Roman nation in the first centuries of her existence They left us admirable examples of justice, integrity, and fortitude, on most trying occasions. . . . As long as this love of justice lasted, the Supreme Ruler of events gave success to their arms, and extended their conquests far and wide, until the whole earth was under their sway.³⁶

Verot used this example of the Roman Empire to illustrate the condition he saw the United States in earlier years. As long as the moral order was intact the empire prospered beyond the known limits of its time. But with the advent of immoral actions the disintegration began and the empire ended in the fall to the invading barbarians.

The Vicar then expanded on this as he progressed through the opening thoughts, setting the stage of the United States' social and political situation as it stood on that January morning. What was once a nation that rested on justice, was now perceived as ready to crumble: "discord and disunion are rapidly spreading over the land."³⁷ The moral responsibility of the people in the nation now was beginning to fall and the result was to pull the state into a civil war.

The bishop continued this course by comparing slavery to the "fatal sandbank" which was to cause the "ship of state" to wreck.³⁸ For both north and south the warning was clear. In order to examine the cause for this great calamity, Verot now began to explain the prime question concerning slavery. Was slavery a moral and lawful institution? Verot's mean to answer this question came by way of his classical, philosophical and theological training, and his own personal experience in dealing with slaves and their masters.

In addressing the question Verot first defined what servitude was and then put forth the notion that man has no claim on the lives of his servants since that right belongs

to God alone.

Servitude is the state of a person dependent on a master, so as to be obliged to work all his life for that master, with the privilege, on the latter to transfer that right to another person by sale. Divines and civilians who examine the foundations of social life, inquire what things can come under the domain or ownership of men, and they agree that we have not a perfect domain or property over our own life and limbs, but only the usufruct of them - that is, a life interest in them; and hence a master, not being the true owner of his own life and limbs, . . . can claim no other right than the usufruct of his slave - that is, a right in his labor and industry, and the labor and industry of his children.³⁹

With these statements the prelate reminded the slaveholders of how far their ownership extended. These points would be used to support the demands that Verot would make in the second part of the homily.

Concerning natural law: ". . . natural law does not establish or institute Slavery."⁴⁰ But Verot stated that if a man wished to sell his freedom and labor for food and clothing then an "equivalent" between the two parties could be constituted.

The equivalent given by the master may be a sufficient inducement for some individuals to offer their work and liberty forever. The slave receives indeed an equivalent, in this certainty of being always provided for . . .⁴¹

Verot therefore says this can become a product of natural need. Other established orders for slavery included: 1) captives in wars; 2) condemned prisoners of crimes; 3) imprisonment for failure to pay debts; 4) being a child of a mother who was in the state of slavery; and 5) long possession in good

faith.⁴² The one area he neglected as legitimate was the slave trade.

Bishop Verot in the next section of the pastoral set about showing through scriptural reference the legitimacy of the institution against the Abolitionist's stand. Sections from Genesis showed the institution of slavery from the beginning of the Old Testament. The Jewish tradition not only allowed for slavery but had laws to regulate it. But Verot not only used the Old Testament, but also New Testament references to show the accepted place of slavery in Christianity.

There is not a word in the New Testament to prohibit it, but there are, on the contrary, plain and evident approbations of it.⁴³

Verot considered the Abolitionists as going against the law of the Divine in their radical approach and lack of understanding for the rights of the owners of slaves. Since most of the bishops were not speaking out on the issue, Verot was compelled by duty to do so. In fact in a letter to the Right Reverend Patrick Lynch, Bishop of Charleston, South Carolina, Verot stated that he had requested that a council of the American hierarchy be convened to consider among other items the "condemnation of the principles of abolitionism."⁴⁴

In his sermon can be found the reason for calling such a council. Here he had alluded to the Canon Law codes which were promulgated at the Council of Gangra in the fourth century. These codes, Verot said, were used to condemn the same ideas the Abolitionists now proselytized.

Here is now the degree of the Council against those heretics: "If anyone teaches the servant of another, under the plea of religion, to condemn his master, and to quit his service, instead of teaching him to serve his master in good faith and with all respect, let him be anathema." No law could be framed more expressive and more pointed against Abolitionism.⁴⁵

In his vehement opposition to the Abolitionism, Verot believed that it was the duty of the clergy, especially the episcopacy to speak out against these heresies. The Archbishop of Baltimore, however, would not adhere to the prelate's advice concerning a council due to the turmoil which now gripped the nation.⁴⁶

The Vicar was motivated to address the stand of the Abolitionists because in that movement he saw remnants of "Know-Nothingism". That group had used the northern press in the 1840's as a tool against the Church. Their present successors now used the same kindling to fuel the scorching of the slave holders in public opinion. The backbone of abolitionism was radical Protestant sects. These, Verot claimed, used the same Abolitionists' issues as springboards to attack Catholicism.⁴⁷

Verot also launched out against the Abolitionists by looking at the role of civil law in the matters of slavery. The civil law takes its authority from society whom it serves. While Verot admitted that some civil codes prohibited slavery around the globe, including those of most Christian states, the United States by nature of the Constitution did not do so.⁴⁸ Because some states had enacted anti-slave laws, Verot

claimed that the Constitution which was the base of the national structure was now being eroded of some of the strength needed to uphold the country in this time of trial. Verot would not question the legitimacy of the stand taken in the highest law of the land in regard to natural law, he simply regarded it as the starting block for future legislation. Any differing laws to the Constitution were to be considered false and void.⁴⁹

To close the first part of his sermon, Verot attacked the famous phrase, "All men are created equal," which the anti-slavery movement liked to use as proof that the slaves indeed deserved to be freed from bondage. This notion was false as viewed by the bishop. If some men come into the world rich and other are poor, and with different degrees of health, then the equality lies not with the state of their human condition, but rather in the fact that they are men and will be judged by their creator as such.⁵⁰ "A man by being a slave, does not cease to be a man, . . ." ⁵¹ Verot then gives this summary of the offensive he has completed on the Abolitionists.

The preceding remarks must convince every candid mind, That the pretensions of Abolitionists have no foundation whatever in nature, or morality, or the word of God, either in the Old or New Testament, or in the enactments of law-givers of the religious or the political order. The fact is, that there has been, in the northern part of the country, an actual conspiracy against justice and truth; . . . is headed by fanatical preachers. Yes, beloved brethren, the chief cause, . . . , lies in the misrepresentations of ignorant and fanatical zealots, who desecrate and pollute the Divine word, speaking in the name of God, although they gainsay all the teachings of God.⁵²

Now Verot shifted to the second part of his sermon concerning the responsibility placed on the masters to make slavery free of moral error. He did this because he knew, ". . . the South has not been, and will not, as a nation, be as patient as the Catholic Church."⁵³ This was in regard to the impending Civil War due to the pressure of the Abolitionists. Therefore the South must show itself to be moral and just in the practice of the institution which was causing all the debate.

The first condition to be legitimized by the masters was the total rejection of the slave trade, namely that from Africa. Verot condemned the trade in very strong and hard language which backed the traditional teaching of the Church.

In the first place, it is domestic slavery which we advocate to be lawful, and to have the sanction of God himself, but it is not the "slave trade," or the African trade. The slave-trade is absolutely immoral and unjust, and is against all laws natural, divine, ecclesiastical and civil. . . . This, next to murder, seems to be the grossest violation of justice that can be conceived.⁵⁴

Secondly, the rights of the freed slaves were to be respected. No prejudice because of skin color could be tolerated with regard to laws which expelled ex-slaves from slave states and territories.⁵⁵ In directing these words, the bishop spoke to what he considered to be paramount and in which his later course of action and ministry would make him a champion of the freed blacks.

The third point, was made "in the name of morality, in

the name of public decency, . . . religion, (and) . . . Christianity."⁵⁶ The item was that which northern Abolitionists most used as an example of the corruptible nature of slavery, the misuse of female slaves by their masters. Verot simply reenforced the moral law and called upon the south to protect and secure the "morality and virtue."⁵⁷ A very similar issue proceeded and drew admonishment, the laws of matrimony. The slaves were to observe the laws, and the masters were not to force marriage or to deny the right to marry. While they could advise the slaves, they had no right over the person and, therefore, could not interfere in the matters of God and man. He pointed toward laws which would also govern the separating of spouses and the demise of the slave families.⁵⁸

The "scarcely necessary to mention" condition for legitimizing slavery was providing the welfare for the slaves. Adequate clothing, food, and shelter were basic natural premises.⁵⁹ Finally, Verot called for the right of the slave to be provided with the knowledge and freedom to practice religion. Here, the bishop was unshakable in his belief that unless the master complied with this condition, he rendered all previous statements void due to the Divine presence considered necessary for this human institution to be preserved.

Hence it would be a great crime, and a great folly at the same time, in masters to keep their servants in ignorance of every religious doctrine; . . . and this flagrant injustice against the souls of slaves would be the sure way to render

Slavery an untenable and ruinous institution, deserving the contempt of men, and the malediction of God.⁶⁰

In concluding his sermon, Verot called for the coming confederacy to adopt a code concerning the rights and duties of both masters and slaves.

Let, then, the wise and the virtuous unite and combine their prudence, their patriotism, their humanity and their religious integrity to divest Slavery of the features which would make it odious to God and man. Now is the time to make salutary reform, and to enact judicious regulations. . . . This will be a means of proving to the world that the South is on the side of justice, morality, reason, and religion. this will be a just vindication of Southern views sanctioned by the Great Arbitrator of nations.⁶¹

Hence with God on their side, the North would be forced to allow the practice to continue until it was feasible to emancipate the slaves from their masters.

Bishop Verot's sermon was well received in the South. However, in the north it earned him the reputation of being a rebel bishop. His motives for delivering the sermon stemmed from a genuine concern he had for the institution which was so dear to his people. He had found satisfaction in working with slaves while a priest in Maryland.⁶² While in St. Augustine, Verot had organized the resources available in order to evangelize the Negroes and assist with the improvement of their social life. This showed that he, as the Catholic Ordinary, was interested in all souls, regardless of color or social status, charged to his pastoral care.⁶³ Because of these concerns, Verot was seen to be a friend of the black

man. Thus, a second major concern, the welfare of the slave gave rise to the discourse of the bishop.

A final assessment of the sermon points to the fact that Verot was simply speaking from a conservative, traditionalist approach to the question posed earlier in this chapter. While he was influenced by his location, his was basically the view of the hierarchy in the United States. While knowing that someday emancipation would indeed occur, the prelate still maintained the right of the master to determine that in accord with the providence of God. What is of importance is simply that the Vicar did as a bishop of the Roman Catholic Church, address the issue publicly. What must be considered sad, is the fact that although the Church had issued pronouncements concerning the slave trade and the moral responsibility of the masters toward their slaves, the system by now, for the most part, was beyond the scope of ecclesial influence. Therefore Verot, in taking the American Catholic stand, was not following the more liberal European notions of what the Church's stand on the institution should be.⁶⁴

As we shall see in the next chapter the Bishop's sermon was to be read by many through out the United States, although not until later in the conflict. Still no one can dismiss the historical importance of the sermon delivered by the French accented Vicar in the old Spanish church in that January day of 1861.

Chapter Three

There was little or no direct reaction to Bishop Verot's sermon by the rest of the American Hierarchy. Due to the coming secession, communication and media coverage were limited with northern papers printing the tract in the middle or near the end of the war. The Archbishop of Baltimore refused permission for Verot to have the sermon published because he considered it to be controversial and the unstable political situation was not favorable for such a document.⁶⁵ Yet this document was the beginning of what was to become a slightly more vocal hierarchy in the wake of the coming war. In order to see the views of the prominent members of the episcopacy, an examination first of the southern bishops and then of the northern bishops will be pursued.

The man who was serving in the See of Charleston, where John England of happy memory had distinguished the Church, was Patrick Lynch. As bishop, Lynch was a strong supporter of the South and the rights of the slave holders. He accused the North of forcing the South to leave the Union by using Abolitionism to deprive the South of its legal welfare whereby the slaves played a major role.⁶⁶ He especially defended the South against some of the letters of Archbishop John Hughes of New York. In a sense he was the spokesman for the South during the war, going so far as to represent the Confederacy in Rome. Much of the prominence was due to the fact that Baltimore was caught in the middle of a border state.

Regarding the Archbishop of Baltimore, The Most Reverend Francis Patrick Kenrick, found himself in a bind. He personally was against slavery and a Unionist at heart. Yet his own newspaper was a pro-slavery instrument. This passage by Dr. Michael Gannon sums up Kenrick, "Thus in the Civil War, Kenrick chose to run with the fox and hunt with the hound, when most of his fellow prelates had opted vigorously for one side or the other."⁶⁷ The Archbishop died during the course of the war in 1863 and due to his less than dynamic leadership as Primate of the hierarchy, the bishops of the country tended to follow the cause taken by their flocks during the war. Had he set a general course of action for the American Church, perhaps even more unity could have been preserved.

Kenrick's successor at the time of the time of the war's beginning, Bishop of Louisville, was one Martin John Spalding. He too was caught by the problems faced by his own boader state of Kentucky. His background was one of slaveholding, having been raised in the South. He was politically moderate and saw slavery as neither truly good or a damning evil.⁶⁸ Because of the weight he placed on the issue of slavery Spalding thought a civil war as being remote; he frankly believed slavery not to be a reason for a war. He was able to make the diocese he had charge over come through the first part of the war when Kentucky was pulled in both directions. Because of his faithful service he succeed the great theologian, Archbishop Kenrick, in Baltimore in 1864.

Archbishop Peter Kenrick, Francis's brother was also located in a boader state with his Metropolitan See situated in St. Louis. Here he seemed to favor the South and in line with these sentiments he refused to fly the Union Flag atop his Cathedral. However he had earlier removed the Balconies in the Cathedral where the slaves had been forced to sit while attending services. Because of this and the good works done by the charity agencies in the Archdiocese for the men of the North during the work, his political ideas were suspected, although he was never undermined.⁶⁹

Other southern bishops supported the Confederacy due to their belief in states rights and the unfair subjugation of the Constitution by northern Republicans. Among these were John Quinlan of Mobile and John McGill of Richmond. Quinlan argued in a Pastoral letter of 1 January, 1861 for the support and defense of the Constitution by the confederation in the South. This was a pre-warning of what was to occur if the sides did not respect the supreme document of the country.

Indeed, it could not be otherwise, Obedience to the highest recognized authority, and assent, without appeal, to its decisions, is the only plan in which state rights and congressional power can move in harmony together. This is the Catholic principle; it is also the keystone of the federal arch.⁷⁰

Bishop McGill, whose diocese suffered much during the war, was so enthusiastic for the rebel cause that he even held a service of thanksgiving at St. Peter's Cathedral in Richmond following a Confederate victory. He strongly resented the

North attempting to subjugate the South.⁷¹

The most prolific letter to be issued in the South came from the Right Reverend Augustus Martin, Bishop of Natchitoches, Louisiana, on August 21st of 1861. In it he condemned the wretched part of slavery, yet in such a way as to show that this was in a minority. The letter is most important in that it came to the attention of the Roman Curia. The Congregation of The Index investigated the contents of the letter. Father Vincenzo M. Gatti, O.P. was named as the Consultor for the case.⁷² He studied the letter for several years and used as point of reference the Apostolic Letter of Gregory XVI (1839). This he took in a more liberal and expanded approach and found the bishop's letter in opposition to the meaning of the Holy Father's letter. To Gatti, the Pope was condemning not only the slave trade but all domestic slavery as well. He recommended that the bishop be given a chance to change his errors before inflicting a hard censorship on the Pastoral.

To see some of the Bishop's points and their critique by Father Gatti, the following examples are presented.

Martin: The manifest will of God is that, in exchange for a freedom, which they are unable to defend and which will kill them, and in return for a lifetime of work, we must give these unfortunate people not only bread and the cloths necessary for their material life but also, and especially, their just share of truth and the goods of grace, . . .

Gatti: The author affirms that the Negroes are incapable of being free and says that freedom would be such a great evil to them that it would kill them. Therefore, he agrees that

they may be deprived of freedom, and even adds that such is God's manifested will. . . . The examples set by the founders of religious orders for the redemption of slaves, by so many saintly monarchs and masters who have freed them, . . . belie this theory of the Bishop, . . .

Martin: From this point of view, which is the only right one since it is divine and expressed by Providence, . . . slavery, far from being an evil, would be an eminently Christian work; and rather than the material and moral improvement of a degraded class, rather than a really human institution, it would be the redemption of millions of human beings who would pass in such a way from the darkest intellectual night to the sweet and vivifying brightness of the light of the Gospel, . . .

Catti: We cannot deny but it is a good thing to let the Negroes share the spiritual good which God has given and still gives to the world. . . . Now it is evil to deprive them of freedom and to subject them to slavery; it is a violation of the natural right; . . . The true Christian good is the one which does not harm people's rights;⁷³

Whether the Roman official fully understood the tradition and area from which the Bishop attempted to communicate with his people is unclear. But what is important is his interpretation of both Gregory's letter and the judgement of the Pastoral, mark a change in Vatican views of slavery as officially pronounced. The case was presented to Pius IX who concurred with the findings as did the Propagation and the Index Congregations. Thus for the first time officially the Church spoke of the evils of slavery. This was to undermine the whole basis of the southern bishops apologetics.

After allowing the American clergy to follow the traditional and historic precedents of the past, with little guidance

from the Popes, the Curia now boldly reversed that course and caught the Americans in midstream. The Americans so long without wind to propell their ships now had a gail but their sails were ripped in two.⁷⁴ The new stance was not fully appreciated by the bishops until after the government had emancipated the slaves by Presidential decree.

Finally one other southern prelate expressed his views on the question, the Right Reverend James Whelan, O.P., the Bishop of Nashville. He, unlike the other bishops in his region, was supportive of the North and the result was his inability to function as the Ordinary in his diocese. Because of opposition by his people, Whelan was forced to resign in bad mental health.⁷⁵

Switching to the North we find several notable prelates who are found to be mixed in their personal feelings and the official public stands they must pronounce. The foremost spokesman for the Northern Church was the Most Reverend John Hughes of New York. Hughes was so prominent among both Catholics and non-Catholics that he was called on by the President through Hughes's good friend William Seward, Secretary of State for Mr. Lincoln, to serve on diplomatic trips to Europe and the Vatican. He was personally against slavery. Yet the war for him had to be separated from the Abolitionist aims. Its purpose was to save the Union, which he believed no state could rightfully leave.⁷⁶

Because of the then known stand on slavery by Rome, Hughes

was opposed to the forceable ending of the institution. As an example of these views Hughes said the following.

But where slaves have been introduced into a country she (the Church) does not require that they should be restored to their primitive condition.⁷⁷

His feelings were, "While we all know that this condition of slavery is an evil, yet it is not an absolute and unmitigated evil."⁷⁸ He saw while the institution was evil in part, it had helped to humanize those who were brought into its folds. As well, his trips to the south prior to the war seemed to show a certain need by the slaves for continuing the practice.⁷⁹ Therefore while being one of the strongest supporters of the Federal Government, he did not wish to see the forcing of the South from that which was needed in their economic and social welfare.

The second most prominent Church leader for the north was John Baptist Purcell of Cincinnati. He liked the North and although cautious at the start, he quickly became strong in his conviction behind the Union. He, like several other northern bishops, flew the Union Flag atop the spire of St. Peter in Chains Cathedral in downtown Cincinnati. As well his paper the Catholic Telegraph had long since condemned slavery and the succession of the southern states.⁸⁰

Another northern bishop who wrote on slavery during the Civil War was Michael Heiss of Milwaukee. He wrote in 1862, saying, ". . . Slavery is certainly a great evil, but if it

is suddenly abolished the south is ruined . . ."⁸¹ He goes on that not only will the owners suffer but also the condition of the slaves will be worse. Thus while being for the North he also sympathized with the plight of the South.

Once the Emancipation Proclamation of 1 January, 1863 was signed by President Lincoln, the northern bishops were more at ease in expressing feelings against slavery. As a matter of fact the Church through its service to both parties in the war, stood out higher in public opinion and therefore was able to be freer in public pronouncements without fear of political assassination.

Protestant sects. As well with the emancipation proclamation most bishops, North and South rallied for a just end to the war and the obeying of the nation's civil laws.

In the Second Plenary Council of 1866 the leaders of the American Church were reconciled and pushed for the improvements of the newly freed blacks. At the First Vatican Council in 1870, Bishop Augustin Verot, the great leader of the Southern Catholics, fought and spoke for the acceptance of the fact that blacks did indeed have souls and were of common origin with whites.⁸³ But it was not until the Second Vatican Council that the Slavery Controversy and the Church's official teachings were full rectified and made clear. The following is taken from Gaudium et Spes.

Whatever violates the integrity of the human person, such as mutilation, torture, inflicted on the human body or mind, attempts to coerce the will itself; whatever insults the human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children . . . all things and others like them are infamous. . . . Human institutions, private or public, must serve man's ends and minister to his dignity. They should be bulwarks against any kind of political or social slavery and guarantors of basic rights under any kind of government. . . . 84

With this new incorporation of beliefs in 1965 what was the tragic story for the American Church that had showed a void in Church teachings and leadership was finally over. The Church is only as good as its members someone once said, and it is fortunate that the final judgement on this matter in Her history is left to the True Judge of the world. For

her part history allows us to view the events and hopefully to learn not to repeat this story, "or one similar.

"Sed homo est homo!"

Conclusion

This story of the American Catholic Hierarchy is a sad one. Although personal views from men of both sides were strong on the topic, no one had a definite public statement which was not colored by sectionalism and which truly spoke of the Christian rights are intended for all. Madeline Hooke Rice has a very good summary of this when she writes the following.

The American Catholic hierarchy, with a few notable exceptions, has not been distinguished for farsighted or courageous leadership in social or economic problems. During the years of the slavery discussions members of the hierarchy by taking refuge in a conservative church tradition, entirely remote from the contemporary issue, contributed to the general impression that their church was proslavery. They helped also to retard the development of a constructive Catholic approach to the slavery issue and encouraged the persistence among their followers of racial and nationalist antipathies which had no place upon the American scene.⁸²

The facts are that the bishops did not respond to the Gospel challenge, but rather escaped through the claim of political pressure and that they lacked leadership and support from Rome. It was a time of darkness in the light of justice. It was the cloaking of moral and natural law by the shrewd manipulation of human lives. The prelates still believed that to convert a soul and then lead it to salvation was the sole mission of the local shepherds.

However, it is worthy to note that this did not cause the Church in America to separate as was the case in certain

Footnotes

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¹ Peter Davis, Editor, The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (New York: Dell Publishing Company Inc., 1973), p. 655

² John Francis Maxwell, Slavery and the Catholic Church (London: Barry Rose Publishers, 1975), p. 28.

³ IBID. p. 30.

⁴ Maria Genoio Caravaglios, The American Catholic Church and the Negro Problem in the XVIII - XIX Centuries (Rome: Tipografia dell' Mantellante, 1974), pp. 32-33, 34.

⁵ IBID. pp. 33-34.

⁶ Maxwell, p. 33.

⁷ IBID. p. 43.

⁸ Caravaglios, p. 35.

⁹ Maxwell, p. 45.

¹⁰ Caravaglios, p. 45.

¹¹ IBID.

¹² IBID. p. 47.

¹³ The Rt. Rev. Ignatius Aloysius Reynolds, Editor, The Works of the Rt. Rev. John England, First Bishop of Chareleston, Volume III. (Baltimore: John Murphy & Company, 1849), p. 112.

¹⁴ IBID. p. 117.

¹⁵ Joseph L. O'Brian, John England Bishop of Charleston (New York: The Edmund O'Toole Company Inc., 1934), p. 149.

¹⁶ Madeleine Hooke Rice, Ph.D., American Catholic Opinion in the Slavery Controversy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944), p. 166.

¹⁷ Reynolds, p. 114.

¹⁸ IBID. p. 116.

¹⁹ IBID.

- 20 IBID. p. 118.
- 21 O'Brian, p. 152.
- 22 Rice, p. 70.
- 23 Reverend John D. Brokhage, Francis Patrick Kenrick's Opinion on Slavery (Washington: Catholic University Press, 1955), p.55. (see f.n. #1 on that page)
- 24 IBID.
- 25 IBID. p. 56.
- 26 IBID. p. 141.
- 27 IBID. p. 150.
- 28 Rice, p. 71.
- 29 Peter Guilday, A History of the Councils of Baltimore (New York: The Macmillian Company, 1932), p. 123.
- 30 Rice, p. 64.
- 31 Guilday, pp. 169-170.
- 32 Rice, p. 64.

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33 Michael V. Gannon "Augustin Verot and the Emergence of Catholic Social Consciousness" (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Florida, 1962), p.221.

34 Michael V. Gannon, Rebel Bishop (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1964), p. 32.

35 Right Reverend Augustin Verot, "A Sermon," Catholic Telegraph, December 20, 1865, appendix p. 2, col. I.

36 IBID.

37 IBID. col. II.

38 IBID. p. 3, col. I.

39 IBID.

40 IBID. col. II.

41 IBID.

42 Gannon, Rebel Bishop, p. 41.

43 Verot, p.4, col. III.

44 Willard E. Wight, Editor, "Letters of the Bishop of Savannah," Georgia Historical Quarterly, vol. 2 (1), 1958, p. 95.

45 Verot, p.5, col. III.

46 Gannon, Rebel Bishop, p. 49.

47 Rice, pp. 93, 109.

48 Verot, p. 5, col. III.

49 IBID.

50 IBID.

51 IBID. p. 6, col. III.

52 IBID. col. I, II.

53 IBID. col. II.

- 54 IBID. p. 6, col. III; p. 7, col. I.
- 55 IBID. p. 7, col. I, II.
- 56 IBID. col. II.
- 57 IBID. col. II, III.
- 58 Gannon, Rebel Bishop, p. 17.
- 59 Verot, p.8, col. I.
- 60 IBID. col. III.
- 61 IBID. p.9, col. I.
- 62 Gannon, Rebel Bishop, p. 17.
- 63 Benjaman J. Blied, "Bishop Verot of Savanah," Georgia Review, (Summer, 1951), p. 163.
- 64 Rice, p. 108.

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- 65 Cannon, Rebel Bishop, p. 49.
- 66 Rice, p. 147.
- 67 Gannon, Thesis, p. 2.
- 68 Thomas W. Spalding, Martin John Spalding: American Churchman, (Washington: The Catholic University Press, 1973) pp. 129-130.
- 69 Caravaglios, pp. 200-201.
- 70 Benjamin J. Blied, Catholic and the Civil War. (Milwaukee: . . ., 1945), p. 59.
- 71 IBID. p. 61.
- 72 Caravaglios, p. 184.
- 73 IBID. pp. 195, 196, 197.
- 74 IBID., p. 187.
- 75 Blied, pp. 66-67.
- 76 Anson Phelps Stokes, D.D., L.L.D., Church and State in the United States, Volume II. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), p. 225.
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- 79 Shaw, p. 335.
- 80 Sister Mary Agnes McCann, Archbishop Purcell and the Archdiocese of Cincinnati (Washington: Dissertation, 1918), pp. 78-79.
- 81 Reverend Benjamin J. Blied, Ph.D., Three Archbishops (Milwaukee: . . ., 1951), pp. 17-18.

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Conclusion

82 Rice, pp. 156-157.

83 Blied, Catholics and the Civil War, p. 65

84 Maxwell, p. 12.

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110. That wait us away on the pinnons of night,
 Eniv'ning the heart that is hapless without
 thee,
 And circling it round with a blissful delight,
 Until memory's gleams
 Lead me back in my dreams
 By the sweet singing streams of my own native
 shore,
 Where thy smile comes to brighten,
 To bless and to lighten
 The lone heart that loves thee, haviourneen
 astore!

We have had sent to us "A Tract
 for the Times"—"Slavery and Aboli-
 tionism—being the substance of a
 sermon preached in the Church
 of St. Augustine, Florida, on the
 4th day of January, 1861—by the
 Rt. Rev. A. VEROE, D. D., Vicar
 Apostolic of Florida, and now
 Bishop of Savannah."

The text of this sermon is: "Jus-
 tice exalteth a Nation: but Sin
 maketh nations miserable," Prov.
 XIV. 24.

The subject: "Rights and Duties
 of Slaveholders."

The rights of slaveholders, or the
 lawfulness of slavery, the Bishop de-
 rives from the Natural law, the
 Divine positive law, the Ecclesias-
 tical, or Canon, and the Civil law, in
 all states of Society, and under all
 governments. The proof of this
 first point would admit no contra-
 diction, if the Right Rev Prelate had
 shown that the law of God, whether
 Natural or positive, or the Ecclesias-
 tical law, sanctioned Negro Slavery
 as it existed in the South. But this
 the Rt. Rev. sermonizer does not
 pretend, or intend to do—so that all
 this first point is irrelevant, super-
 fluous. We may say of it—*transeat.*

But in the second part, with
 apostolic freedom, he plainly shows
 the abominations of Negro Slavery
 in his admirable instructions to the
 slaveholders on their "duties." And
 this second part we present to our
 readers as our own complete justifi-
 cation for our unqualified condemna-
 tion of Negro Slavery.

We had underlined and made
 comments on some of the Bishop's
 remarks, in which, as a Southern
 citizen, he touches lightly on some
 of the shortcomings of the South,
 but we prefer to present his remarks
 as he has uttered and printed them.

We particularly call to them the at-
 tention of the New York Nation,
 which has made so bitter an attack
 on the memory of the late Arch-
 bishop of New York for not doing
 what has been so boldly and so well
 done by the Bishop of Savannah.
 We hope his eloquent and instruc-
 tive words will be read and ponder-

Wednesday, December 20, 1865.

FORE.

SERMON.

JUSTICE EXALTETH A NATION: BUT SIN
MAKETH NATIONS MISERABLE. — PROV.
XIV. 34.)

ON:
at in whose
were of thee
Queen of my
that's thine
to me once
unavouching
joyless and
the scene;
only,
then.
adore,
dies
seen astore!
ancies about
a night,
ess without
delight.
own native
sighten,
unavouching
A Tract
d Abolition
ce of a
Church
on the
—by the
Vicar
d now
Justice
out Sin
Prov.
Duties
or the
hop do-
w, the
clesias-
law, in
der all
of this
contra-
te had
hether
clesias-
lavery
of this

BELOVED BRETHREN:—This is a great, a most important truth, involving the most momentous interests, which I deem expedient and necessary, on this melancholy occasion, to present to your earnest consideration. "Justice exalteth a nation: but sin maketh nations miserable." We learn this important lesson from the Wise Man who has written the Book of Proverbs; but it is not the result of his individual and personal wisdom which I present to you, it is the unerring dictate of the Holy Ghost: who inspired and directed the sacred penman to record, in that portion of the Scripture, a maxim which is an imperishable truth, because it is the word of Him who is truth itself—who can neither deceive nor be deceived; and indeed, heaven and earth shall pass away, but His words shall not pass away. But, independently of the unexceptionable authority of Him who has promulgated this sublime maxim of true and genuine statesmanship, and of sacred and divine politics, we have history to bear witness to the truth of the sentence of the Wise Man—"Justice exalteth a nation: but sin maketh nations miserable." The rise and fall of nations, consigned to the pages of history, is but a continual application and confirmation of this principle of the unerring truth. The great Doctor of the Church—the patron of this city and congregation—St Augustine, in his admirable work "Of the City of God," undertook to show the true reason of the unexampled prosperity of the Roman Empire. That Empire was the most extensive and the most prosperous that ever existed: it extended itself to the remotest corners of the known universe. Even the wild nations that could not be reached by its authority, respected and dreaded the very name of the Romans. That illustrious Doctor does not hesitate to say, that this temporal prosperity of the Empire was the reward of the moral virtues which illustrated the Roman nation in the first centuries of her existence, and which were never more conspicuous than in the men whom she placed at the head of her armies, and to whom she gave the direction of civil and political affairs. They left us admirable examples of justice, integrity and fortitude, on most trying occasions. Such was their love of justice, that one of their enemies, who had fought against them with success dearly bought, knowing that gold, which is so powerful on men, could have no effect on the chief officer of Rome to bribe or corrupt him, remarked that it would be easier to turn the sun from his course, than the Roman Consul from the path of justice. As long as this love of justice lasted, the Supreme Ruler of events gave success to their arms, and extended their conquests far and wide, until the whole earth was under their sway. But, at a later period, injustice, iniquity, ambition, covetousness and bribery crept into the Empire, and were found even disgracing the leaders of the nation. It was then that Almighty God permitted that hordes of Barbarians should invade that Empire, now fallen from its pristine justice and integrity; and these Barbarians devastated and overturned the colossal Empire, and swept its authority, its grandeur, and its very name from the earth.

Such is then the plan of Divine Providence in the government of this world. If iniquity, injustice, rapine and bloodshed seem sometimes to meet with success, it is only temporal and ephemeral, similar to the devastation produced by a swollen torrent, but such causes cannot establish, settle, and place on a permanent basis, any civil and political institution; any government that rests upon injustice, must necessarily crumble with its tottering foundation. "Justice exalteth a nation: but sin maketh nations miserable." Our beloved country is now undoubtedly under the operation of that stern and inflexible rule of justice, at the hands of the Author of justice. We have hitherto been a nation prosperous beyond even the most exaggerated conceptions of a wild imagination; productions of every kind lavished by our soil; an abundance, not to say an overflowing, of the circulating medium; extensive factories, an active commerce, and the rich and exuberant fruits of industry by sea and by land, have made the United States a paragon of riches—a sort of elysian fields, in which the overflowing population of Europe came to enjoy abundance, riches, peace and freedom. The aspect is suddenly changed: the political horizon has become gloomy; a day of humiliation, fasting and prayer is kept over the land, to avert impending evils; discord and disunion are rapidly spreading over the length and breadth of the land; the horrors of war, and of the worst kind—of civil war—are staring us in the face, and the prosperity, hitherto unparalleled, of the country, has given way to mutual distrust, unbusiness, suspension of commerce, stagnation of industry, suffering, and the anticipation of evils yet worse to come. The cause must no doubt be, that we have for-

gotten justice, and that sin has crept frightfully among us to make us miserable: for Almighty God hates in us only sin, and the disorderly bend of our wills by which we transgress His law.

Slavery is the origin of the present disturbances, and is the fatal sandbank upon which the Ship of State has already made a total or partial shipwreck. Injustice then has been committed upon this point, and I deem the present occasion to be a very favorable one, to place before your eyes some truths which are of great importance to the nation at large—to the North and to the South—to the people collectively, and to individuals—to masters, and to servants. I wish to show, on the one side, how unjust, iniquitous, unscriptural, and unreasonable is the assertion of Abolitionists, who brand Slavery as a moral evil, and a crime against religion, humanity and society; whereas, it is found to have received the sanction of God, of the Church and of Society at all times, and in all governments. On the other side, I wish to show the conditions under which servitude is legitimate, lawful, approved by all laws, and consistent with practical religion and true holiness of life in masters who fulfill those conditions.

Servitude is the state of a person dependent on a master, so as to be obliged to work all his life for that master, with the privilege, in the latter, to transfer that right to another person by sale. Divines and civilians who examine the foundations of social life, inquire what things can come under the domain or ownership of men, and they agree that we have not a perfect domain or property over our own life and limbs, but only the *usufruct* of them—that is, a life interest in them, and hence a master, not being the true owner of his own life and limbs, cannot be the owner or proprietor of the life and limbs of a slave; this high domain belongs exclusively to our Maker: a master can claim no other right than the *usufruct* of his slave—that is, a right on his labor and industry, and the labor and industry of his children. This being premised, we can show, to the satisfaction of every one who is not determined to shut his eyes against the truth, that the state of servitude is reprobated neither by natural law, Divine positive law, nor by the ecclesiastical law, nor by the civil laws. Those four kinds of laws are the sources of all justice, of all right, and from them emanate all the directions and prescriptions which govern the actions of men. Natural or moral law is that which arises from the nature or essence of moral and reasonable beings, and is engraved in our hearts by our Maker, the Author of Nature. Such are the Commandments—*Thou shalt not kill—Thou shalt not steal, &c.* Divine positive law is that command of God which requires something in addition to natural law. Such was the circumcision prescribed to the Jews, or baptism prescribed now to Christians. Ecclesiastical law comes from the Church, which God has established, with an express command to us to hear her: "He that heareth you, heareth me: he that despiseth you, despiseth me.—Luke x. 16." Civil law comes from the governments under which we live, and which it is our duty to obey:—"Let every soul be subject to higher powers."—Rom. xiii. 1. Now Slavery is condemned by none of these laws, as it is easy to show.

As to natural law:—it must be said, indeed, that natural law does not establish or institute Slavery: no one is, by nature, the slave of another; but natural law approves of reasons and causes by which a man may become the slave of another man. The case stands here precisely as with regard to the division of property. No land belongs to anybody by the right of nature, but legitimate titles constitute it the property of individuals. Any one, ever so little conversant with history, finds Slavery established among all nations of antiquity, and it is not improbable that it is coeval with the division of property. Writers on this branch of science assign the various titles which legitimate a state of Slavery, and which, no doubt, must have been originally the source and beginning of its introduction among men. The first title they assign, is the sale that a man makes of himself to a master. A man may sell his labor, and work for a day, a week, a month or a year: why may he not sell it for all his life? If it be said that a sale requires a consideration, and an equivalent between the contracting parties, this is very true. But the master gives an equivalent, namely—food and clothing to the slave, with the assurance and security to him to find them at all times, and especially the promise to support and maintenance in sickness and in old age, when he will be unable to work. The equivalent given by the master may be a sufficient inducement for some individuals to offer their work and liberty for ever. The slave receives indeed an equivalent, in this certainty of being always provided for—a certainty which many distressed and starving families in Europe, and in the large cities of America, would indeed appreciate highly, as they know what a source of interminable care, anxiety, and solicitude

this matter is for them. It is truly remarkable, how gay, cheerful and sprightly are the slaves of the South. I do not hesitate to say that they seem to be better contented than the masters; assuredly more so than the gloomy population found in the workshops and factories of large cities. The master therefore gives an equivalent. This is so true, that, for me personally, I would not accept persons who would offer their services for life, on condition for maintaining them forever, precisely on account of the danger of having services that might prove unacceptable, and on account of the heavy charge such persons occasion in sickness and old age. I know of masters who were poor when they had slaves, and had become rich by setting them free; and I have no doubt it is one of the reasons for which Slavery has become gradually extinct in Europe.

Another title of servitude mentioned by canonists and jurists, is capture in a just war, as history tells us how the captives in war used to be sold as slaves. The conqueror could put them to death; it is assuredly a better lot for them that they be sold as slaves. Christianity has introduced a more humane legislation in reference to prisoners of war, for which we must thank our Redeemer; but nature alone and strict justice declares that, in a just war, the vanquished forfeits his life to the victor, who does him kindness by granting life at the expense of liberty. Another title I must mention, is the condemnation to Slavery for crimes committed, or even for non-payment of debts. This is likewise a point on which Christianity has introduced milder forms; but we must not forget that they are not a right, and not a strict right: he who is condemned to hard labor in a penitentiary, would find his lot much improved in the condition of a slave. Again, if a man cannot pay his debts, he may be compelled, in strict justice, to work in order to pay them, and this, no doubt, must have been a frequent title of servitude. Our Lord mentions it in one of His parables, without a word to censure what was then a general practice. "One was brought who owed his lord ten thousand talents, and, as he had not wherewith to pay it, his lord commanded that he should be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made."—Matt. xiii. 25. A spirit of philanthropy (whether judicious or not I do not examine) has induced modern legislation to suppress imprisonment, much more Slavery, for debt, and dishonest debtors are very partial to such legislation; but the ancients entertained different ideas of stern and strict justice, for which we are not at liberty to blame them.

Nativity, or birth from a mother in a state of Slavery, is also admitted by writers to be a just cause of servitude; *partus sequitur ventrem* is an axiom in law. A child follows the condition and state of his parents, and the child must perish, unless it be maintained and supported by the master; if the child could speak, he would prefer being a slave to being exposed to the necessity of dying for want of sustenance, and hence this title has been readily admitted wherever Slavery has at all existed, and in Scripture, as we shall soon see, confirms it. Finally, we mention long possession in good faith, with an apparent title, to be a legitimate cause for holding slaves. This title was called prescription by the Latins, and has retained that name in almost all European languages. This is the title introduced by the general consent of nations, for the security of property. If

we have possessed something for a long time in good faith, thinking it is ours, it is really ours, although there might arise, after a long lapse of years, some contestation about the validity of the title. We see, therefore, that there are many ways in which Slavery may lawfully exist, and that such a state is not reprobated by reason, or by the natural or innate notions of justice, when some of those titles exist. Civil law may condemn some of those titles in the present refined state of society: in that case, such titles will be invalid, not because they are adverse to the natural law, but because they are made void by the law of the land.

Let us now examine whether the Divine positive law condemns Slavery. If Slavery be immoral in itself, no Divine law can command it or approve of it, because God cannot command or authorize something immoral; if it be not immoral in itself, still God could forbid it, as he forbade, in old times, the eating of blood and of other things. In this respect, however, we find that God, in the Old Testament, under the law of nature, and under the law of Moses, not only did not prohibit Slavery, but sanctioned it, regulated it, and specified the rights of masters, and the duties of slaves. It would certainly be tedious to adduce all the proofs of my assertion which could be extracted from the Old Testament; a few of the most striking will be amply sufficient. Abraham was assuredly a good man; now Abraham was a Slaveholder, and a very large one indeed. When his nephew, Lot, was taken prisoner, (Gen. xiv. 14,) "he numbered of the servants born in his house

three hundred and eighteen well appointed," pursued and defeated the invaders, and delivered Lot and all the people. The Scripture here approves of the title of nativity, by mentioning that these slaves were born in his house. In the same page of Genesis, chap. xiv, we find a more striking, and pointed approbation of Slavery. For reasons stated in that chapter, Sara, the wife of Abraham, was obliged to treat with severity her handmaid—or female servant—Agar; the latter ran away, and "an angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, he said to her: Agar, handmaid of Sarai, whence comest thou? and whither goest thou? And she answered: I flee from the face of Sarai, my mistress. And the Angel of the Lord said to her: Return to thy mistress, and humble thyself under her hand."—v. 7. How strange must all this be for Abolitionists who retain their belief in the Bible! God sends an Angel purposely to tell a runaway slave to return to her mistress, and humble herself to her; and Abolitionists have set aside all laws, and torn the fundamental articles of the Constitution, to enable runaway slaves to escape pursuit and just demands of their masters; the angel proclaims obedience and submission to slaves, and they excite them to revolt, and are ready to aid them in shaking off the authority of their masters. Nothing more is wanted to show that the spirit of the Abolitionists is not the spirit of the Angels of God, the spirit of the Bible, the spirit of truth and justice—but the demon of anarchy, discord, stubbornness and pride. Again, the following chapter in Genesis mentions that Abraham circumcised all the males in his house, not only those who were born in his house, but also "the bought servants"—v. 23 and 27—which shows that the sale of Slaves is not condemned by

Scripture. Indeed it seems that every page of Holy Writ contains some statement to demolish the false and unjust principles of Abolitionism! Those men must be ignorant even of the Ten Commandments of God; for the Tenth Commandment also forbids coveting our neighbors' property: "nor his servant, nor his handmaid, nor his ox," &c.—Exod. xx. 17. The Lord here forbids desiring and designing to take servants from their masters, and the modern fanatics not only desire, but actually take iniquitous means to release servants from their masters, in defiance of the plainest laws of God. Finally, the twenty-first chapter of Exodus contains laws emanating from God himself, to regulate Slavery among the Jews. The Jewish servant or slave who had sold himself, could be retained only until the year of the general jubilee, by a special law of the Jews. The same chapter contains several provisions relating to the same subject: they all suppose servitude to be lawful. The twenty-fifth chapter of Leviticus allows Jews to have bondmen and bondwomen of the nations that are round about them: "These you shall have for servants, and by right of inheritance, shall leave them to your posterity, and shall possess them forever"—v. 44, 45, 46. Here is Slavery again sanctioned and approved by the laws of God himself, consigned in a Book which all revere as the Word of God. Can there be anything, then, more unscriptural than Abolitionism; and if this country be the country of the Bible, as some have asserted, Abolitionism must be then of exotic growth.

I am aware of an objection—which is indeed a serious one—but which I meet at once, because it will wonderfully strengthen my argument. The Jews were a rude and carnal people: their religion was but rudimentary and figurative, and very imperfect. These defects have been amended in the New Law, which has brought all things to perfection. New Law has abolished Slavery, although it was allowed in times past. Indeed, this is what has taken place with regard to some points relative to marriage. Divorce, and polygamy were allowed to them of old. Still no one could sanction the practice of them by the example of the good men of the Old Testament, or by the law of Moses. But the case is as clear and obvious as possible. Our Lord has expressly, formally and pointedly abolished divorce and polygamy: "They shall be two in one;" "What God has joined, no man can put asunder;" But he has not proscribed or forbidden Slavery. There is not a word in the New Testament to prohibit it, but there are, on the contrary, plain and evident approbations of it. In the eighth chapter of St. Matthew, a Centurion Slaveholder comes to our Lord to ask for the cure of his servant, and, in the course of the conversation, the Centurion says: "I have soldiers under me; and I say to this man go, and he goeth; and to another come, and he cometh; and to my servant do this, and he doeth; and Jesus hearing this wondered, and said: "Amen; I say to you, I have not found so great faith in Israel." How different was this way of acting from that of an Abolitionist. The latter would have reproached the Centurion for the crime of injustice, barbarity and inhumanity in keeping slaves. Jesus, on the contrary, not only has no rebuke to administer on the score of Slavery, but admires and praises the faith of that man, and grants a cure to his servant, a manifest and incontestible proof that our Lord did not hold the Centurion guilty for having a slave.

Let it be remarked that the word servant, here in the passages already quoted, means a slave—in Latin, *servus*—and when the Scripture speaks of servants in a limited sense, as are the white servants among us, they are called hirelings or laborers. The Apostles, who were taught by our Lord, and who preached His Gospel, and established His Church in every part of the world, had also to speak of slaves, and they have done so in their inspired writings, so as to leave no doubt on the right which a master has to keep his slave, and on the obligation of a slave to honor and obey his master. St. Paul, in the seventh chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, says positively, that each one ought to remain in the state of life in which he was called to Christianity—slave, if he was slave; free, if he was free—for this is of little consequence, viewed in reference to the next life: "Let every man abide in the same calling in which he was called. Art thou called being a bondman? care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called to the Lord being a bondman, is the bondman of Christ." From which we see how far the Apostles were from the doctrine and practice of modern fanatics, who exhort slaves to make themselves free by any means they can, *per fas et nefas*. St. Paul, in several of his Epistles, speaks of the mutual duties of slaves and masters; he never dreams of

the new duty invented by Abolitionists—the pretended duty for the master to liberate and manumit his slave, and the duty for the slave to runaway from his master, even by using violence, and causing bloodshed. The inspired Apostle tells the slave to obey, as a point of conscience, as a necessary means of salvation; and he tells the master to treat the servant with justice and kindness. Thus, Colos. iii. 22. "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not serving to the eyes, as pleasing men, but in simplicity of heart, fearing God. . . . Masters, do to your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that you also have a Master in Heaven." Similar admonitions occur in several other Epistles: it would be superfluous to quote them. There is a passage yet more pointed, 1 Tim. ch. vi. "Whoever are servants under the yoke, let them count their masters worthy of all honor, lest the name and doctrine of the Lord be blasphemed. . . . These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to that doctrine which is according to piety, he is proud, knowing nothing;" and truly Abolitionism is but a compound of insufferable pride and unpardonable ignorance. St. Peter, First Epistle, ii. 18, points out the duty of obedience to servants in all cases whatever: "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the forward." But facts instruct us better than words, and we have to see the conduct of St. Paul with regard to a fugitive slave, to judge better of the glaring opposition of Abolitionism to the Apostles, and to the Sacred Scripture. The Epistle to Philemon is a short page of the Sacred Volume, which they should indeed desire to expunge. Philemon had a slave called Onesimus, who ran away from his master, a citizen of Colossæ and whom St. Paul found in Rome, and converted to Christianity. Now St. Paul found in Onesimus qualities which made him desirous of his services in his ministry. What did the great Apostle do? Did he tell Onesimus that he had been right to run away, and procure his liberty at any price? No; he

sent back Onesimus to his master with an Epistle, which is a perfect model of sweet, persuasive eloquence, begging Philemon to forgive his slave, and send him back to him, as he needed his services in the bonds of the Gospel. Paul had just claims on the gratitude of Philemon; still he would not detain his slave without his consent, but sent him back, that his master might be perfectly free to grant or to refuse the favor asked of him. How different are these views of St. Paul, and of the Word of God, from those which are entertained by Abolitionists!

We have now seen how both the Old and New Testament admits, sanctions and authorizes Slavery, from which we conclude that this state of life is not against the Divine and positive law. We add now that the Church has made no general law against Slavery, but has kept up the teaching and examples of the Apostles on this point, leaving masters at liberty to keep or to manumit their slaves, as they thought proper. The book I have in my hands, beloved brethren, is the Canon Law, or Law of the Church. Now the book is full of passages relating to slaves; and to attempt to prove that Canon Law recognizes Slavery, and countenances masters in retaining possession of their slaves, would almost be ludicrous, and would be tantamount to an attempt to prove that the sun shines in the heavens, at mid day, as there are whole chapters, indeed, and sections on that matter. Not to detain you too long, beloved brethren, I will content myself with one or two quotations that will, indeed, cover the whole ground of the discussion. The Canon Law contains several provisions in relation to the ordination of slaves, as the example of St. Paul ordaining Onesimus, seems to have been a precedent for such appointments. The Eighty-first Apostolic Canon says that slaves may be ordained, if manumitted by their masters; but if they be admitted to the clergy without the will of their masters, they must be returned to their masters. Now we see this to be done from the same Canon Law, Distinct. 54, ch. 10 where the Pope orders one Leontius, who had been promoted to the lower ranks of the clergy, to be under subjection and obedience to his master in the condition of a slave. Assuredly the Church could not have recognized the rights of masters in a more forcible or pointed manner; no one, then, has a right to take slaves from their masters against the will of those masters. The Canon Law, can. xvii. ques. 4. c. 37, contains a decree of the Council of Gangres, held in the beginning of the fourth century, which condemns heretics who maintained the principles of modern Abolitionists; whence we see that the fanatics of our day have not the merit of having invented their hypocritical schemes of false philanthropy; they had predecessors in the early ages of the Church, who wished to liberate, and who denounced masters as guilty of injustice and inhumanity. Here is now the decree of the Council against those heretics: "If any one teaches the servant of another, under the plea of religion, to contemn his master, and to quit his service, instead of teaching him to serve his master in good faith and with all respect, let him be anathema." No law could be framed more expressive and more pointed against Abolitionism. The highest penalty inflicted by the Church, that of anathema, or excommunication, is pronounced against those who teach the doctrine of the Abolitionists, and it is only an aggravation of their guilt to allege pretexts of religion, and wreat Holy Writ in support of their at-

tempts. This is indeed more than sufficient to show that Slaveholders have the sanction of the Church and of Religion in retaining the possession of their servants. Ecclesiastical History tells us, as we gather from authentic documents, that the Church and Monasteries owned slaves; and St. Gregory the Great—the learned and pious Pope, to whom England is indebted for her Christianity—with the money of the Roman Church bought English slaves, to set them free and teach all Christianity, and also Barbary slaves—to use the former in evangelizing England and the latter in the service of the sick in a Roman hospital. We learn this from the letters of the Pontiff himself. Assuredly no slave owner need scruple to do what so holy, so zealous, and so learned a Pope has done. We come now to the civil law in relation to Slavery. The civil law can modify, introduce, or suppress things or practices, whenever such enactments are not in direct opposition to moral and natural law.

Hence the civil law may prohibit Slavery, and it does prohibit it in several countries, and perhaps in the greater part of Christian nations. But such a prohibition takes its force and efficacy solely from the civil law. As for the United States, it is plain that the Constitution, framed after the War of Independence, recognizes the relations of master and slave, and that the law of the United States gives a right to the master to reclaim and seize his fugitive slave, wherever he may be found within the United States. No matter whether the dictum was, is, true, or false, it was the *stamen* of the nation's life—in birth—its existence, its all future. It was to be the basis of all its legislation—and whatever was inconsistent with it was to be henceforth, by the nation, rejected, false and wrong. These statements are undeniable, and there is no occasion for me to dwell on a point known to everybody. Those States which have enacted laws against the Constitution, and the Legislation of the United States, have sapped the very foundation of social order, and are the true and responsible causes and agents of the misfortunes which have already befallen the nation, and of the greater calamities with which it is threatened. The words of my text receive here their application: "Justice exalteth a nation: but in maketh nations miserable." On what nation, or part of nations, has the misery fallen?

Before concluding this first part of my address, I must take a cursory notice of the reasons and objections raised by Abolitionists against the doctrine delivered in the preceding remarks. I will not notice the allegation of agrarians and anarchists that "all men are born free and equal." This assertion, although liberal and popular with a certain class of persons, is, however, false and a glaring falsehood. Some are born poor, and others rich. Some are born weak, puny and unhealthy; others strong and healthy. Some are born dull and stupid, others of quick and penetrating intellect, etc., etc.; for the enumeration would be too long. The true ground of equality in men is that we will be condemned by our Maker only for guilt voluntarily and freely incurred, or rewarded in the next life only for the supernatural good we will have accomplished in this life, only for having, or for not having, loved our neighbor as ourselves. Yes, but before this had clause in the Constitution was the Declaration of Independence—that all men are, or ought to be—free and equal in many, if not in all, things. In all these respects a slave is absolutely on the same footing with his master. But the Bible is brought forward against

Slavery, and Abolitionists of course quote the Bible in support of their theories, although it must be apparent to every one from the quotations already adduced, that if the battle of Abolitionism is to be fought on Scripture ground, they are already discomfited. Indeed, it is enough to remark, that none of the modern fanatics have gone to the length of impiety and blasphemy, as to assert unblushingly that if the Bible upholds Slavery, the Bible must be amended. No better confutation of Abolitionism need be adduced, than the necessity to which it drives its defenders of uttering execrable impieties and blasphemies. Those who would not set aside the authority of the inspired volume, allege from it these general maxims, that Christ has liberated us; that there is no slave in the Christian religion. But it is evident they speak of spiritual liberty, the only one which deserves the name, liberty from sin, liberty from corrupt inclinations, from Satan, and not liberty from civil powers, and masters, to whom they teach positively and expressly, that obedience is due; so that to resist them, is to resist the appointment of God. Hence, the passage which says there is no slave, runs thus, Galat. iii. 28: "There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Jesus Christ." Words which it would be ludicrous to allege as imitating the extinction of domestic Slavery. The passages of Scripture, however, which the Abolitionists urge with greater confidence, are those which command men to pay the wages of their laborers and hirelings. The following are those they quote; Lev. xix. 13. The wages of him that hath been hired by thee, shall not abide with thee until the morning.—Deut. xxiv. 14, 15, has a text of the same import; and St. James, in the New Testament rebukes thus the rich.—Ch. v. 4. "Behold, the hire of the laborers, who have reaped your fields, of which you have defrauded them, crieth; and the cry of them hath entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth." But it is perfectly obvious that these quotations have no bearing whatever on the question. When our Slaveholders hire laborers, they pay them according to the agreement made, and this is all, that the Scripture speaks of. The texts, here quoted, speaks of laborers and hired servants, and not of slaves belonging to the masters, for whom they work. The very fact that the Scripture makes the distinction between hired men, or laborers or slaves, shows that the slaves are not entitled to any wages, because they are not hired by the day. Slaves, however, receive their hire or a compensation for their services in the food, clothing and dwelling which they receive, in the care that is taken of them in their infancy, and in the assurance they have to be provided for in time of sickness, and in old age.

The preceding remarks must convince every candid mind, that the pretensions of Abolitionists have no foundation whatever in nature, or morality, or the word of God, either in the Old or New Testament, or in the enactments of law-givers of the religious or the political order. The fact is, that there has been, in the northern part of the country, an actual conspiracy against justice and truth; and I am sorry I have to state (but a just regard for truth and justice compels me to do it) this conspiracy against justice and truth, is headed by fanatical preachers. Yes, beloved brethren, the chief cause, the true source of the misfortunes which weigh already upon the land, and bid fair to increase a hundred fold, lies in the misrepresentations of

ignorant and fanatical zealots, who desecrate and pollute the Divine word, speaking in the name of God, although they gainsay all the teachings of God. They are the false prophets, of whom the Scripture says, Jer. xxiii. 21: "I did not send prophets, but yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied." Now, beloved brethren, they are the same who have heretofore assailed, calumniated, vilified our Church, and have resorted to the vilest and most iniquitous devices which infernal malice can suggest, in order to destroy our

holy religion, or that Church which is founded on the chair of Peter, and recognizes the Pope as the visible head of the Church on earth. It is to their nefarious machinations that we are to ascribe the burning of the Charleston Convent, which in the middle of the night drove innocent and defenseless females out of their home into the fields, and the Philadelphia riots, where arson and murder against unoffending Catholics, became the order of the day; and so many other acts of crying injustice, cruelty and barbarity, during that religious excitement from which we are just now emerging; I mean the movement of Know Nothingism. During that period, the press, which is more or less under the sway of those fanatical leaders, has teemed with the most absurd, unjust, obscene, and revolting slanders and lies against Catholic Institutions, chiefly Convents (as in the case of Maria Monk) and against Priests and Bishops and the Pope. The party, although a thousand times unmasked and convicted of perjury, lies and palpable injustice, has kept on its course of violence, deception and misrepresentation. It seemed quite impossible for it to learn any lesson from truth, moderation and justice, because indeed it was urged on by blind fanaticism, and by the demon of religious, or rather anti religious, bigotry. Those blind leaders, quitting the sphere which they seem to claim, when they style themselves reformed, have sent remonstrances to Congress on points evidently out of the pale of political and civil legislation; they have also invaded State legislatures, and in those places have disgraced their proceedings by iniquity and injustice. It is that same party which, baffled in its attempts against the Catholic Church, has opposed only patience, silence and prayer to its unholly attacks, and exasperated by the rebuke it received from the nation (for, it could not destroy the sense of justice so deeply engraved in the American breast), has now turned its weapons against the South, advocating, in the name of the Bible, the liberation of slaves. But the South has not been, and will not, as a nation, be as patient as the Catholic Church. As an additional proof that this Abolitionism is the same party which has lately waged war against the Catholic Church, I have only to state a fact asserted by the late illustrious and eloquent Bishop of Charleston, Dr. England, in his treatise on Slavery, which his death left imperfect, a fact of which he had been an eye witness, namely, that the Abolitionists of England presented regularly every year or two petitions to Parliament, one to ask that the slaves of America be set free, the other to ask that the vexatious and bloody penalties enacted against Irish Catholics be executed and strictly enforced. I must likewise make another remark, the truth of which struck every thinking mind at the outbreak of the present disturbances. Protestant writers have been extolling the Republic of the United States, as endowed with wonderful strength, stability and order,

when compared with the Republic of South America, in which the majority of the people profess the Catholic religion. The invidious comparison has often been made; as if free and liberal institutions could not prosper under our Church, and as if Protestantism alone could found, establish and foster Republican Institutions. The present state of affairs show how ill grounded these views have been. The fact is, that religion has nothing to do with the disturbances and agitations of the Governments of Spanish origin, which have sprung up South of the United States. The true cause of those agitations lies in the ambition, and other wicked passions of men who are unwilling to be controlled by religion, and who deem it right to attack religion in order to become rich from its spoils. But in the United States, it will be properly and clearly religion or rather bigotry that will have destroyed the beautiful fabric of Washington and the other great men who wished so much to keep the Government and religion separate from each other. The Catholics of America have scrupulously adhered to those constitutional provisions, and have interferred only by praying for the Republic, the general peace and welfare of their fellow-citizens. As for the Protestant Clergy, with, of course, honorable exceptions, they have brought about this deplorable state of things, in which the South is arrayed against the North, and in which war, bloodshed, and all the atrocities of civil discord may yet have their sad exhibition. Protestant intolerance and bigotry have demolished this beautiful edifice, which wisdom, moderation and prudence had reared to political liberty.

I must now, brethren, pass to the second part of my discourse, and having shown the lawfulness of Slavery in general, I must show the conditions upon which this state of things receives the sanction of justice, of God himself, and of the church—the visible guide given us by Our Lord Jesus Christ. It is in this part that I may have to mention wrongs which the South ought to acknowledge and confess; and if these wrongs be persevered in, this may be the reason why the Almighty, in his justice and wise severity, may sweep Slavery out of the land, not because Slavery is wrong in itself, but because men will abuse it through wanton malice. The necessity of some conditions for the legitimacy of Slavery must appear evident to everybody, because under the control of such bad masters, it was bad in itself, and its abuse was inevitable; and hence no law, however divine, could sanction it. A man, by being a slave, does not cease to be a man, retaining all the properties, qualities, attributes, duties, rights and responsibilities attached to human nature, or to a being endowed with reason and understanding, and made to the image and likeness of God. A master has not over the slave the same rights which he has over an animal, and whoever would view his slaves merely as beasts, would have virtually abjured human nature, and would deserve to be expelled from human society. I will then state the various conditions which must accompany a legitimate possession of slaves.

In the first place, it is domestic Slavery which we advocate to be lawful, and to have the sanction of God himself, but it is not the "slave trade," or the African trade. The slave-trade is absolutely immoral and unjust, and is against all laws natural, divine, ecclesiastical and civil. The slave-trade consists in kidnapping negroes by fraud and violence on the coasts of Africa, and bringing them to America for sale. This trade is evidently condemned by justice and humanity. What right has any man to steal another man and enslave him? This, next to murder, seems to be the grossest violation of justice that can be

conceived. It is no palliation of this trade to assert that the condition of these poor creatures will be bettered by selling them to christian masters in America; for evil is not to be done in order to obtain a good result. It is absolutely evil to deprive them of liberty without any just cause; no good effect can render it lawful. Besides, that effect is doubtful, as the religion and education of the whites who commit such horrible theft, must be hateful to those poor negroes. It is not an excuse for the trade, but an additional monstrosity, to say that those negroes are sold to the captains of vessels by other tribes who have captured them in war; for the war is for no other reason than to make prisoners; it is not a war, but an abominable plunder of human beings. Hence the slave-trade has been most severely prohibited by nearly all European Governments. It is, as all know, expressly forbidden by the United States, and we hear frequently of vessels engaged in that abominable traffic, having been seized and captured by the men-of-war of the nation. As to the ecclesiastical law, his Holiness, Gregory XVI, in the year 1839, issued apostolic letters forbidding most expressly this shameful commerce, forbidding any one to teach that it is lawful. In that document, his Holiness quotes decrees of his predecessors who had condemned the slave-trade. The letter of Pope Gregory XVI was solemnly read in the council of American Prelates held in Baltimore in the year 1840. All laws stigmatize and reprove the slave-trade, and it must be a subject of regret and mortification for the true friends of the Southern cause and Southern rights, that some people have expressed, or hinted, a desire that the slave trade should be revived, and that the prohibition of it by the Government should be repealed. Fortunately, the number of advocates of this infamous trade is so small, that it may well be considered as nothing. Indeed, if a Southern Confederacy was to authorize this worst of piracies, we could predict with certainty its speedy downfall, because it would not be founded on justice, but on iniquity. "Justice exalteth a nation; but sin makes nations miserable." But there is not the slightest fear of this, not now, thank God. Ah! when a negro king conquered his negro enemies, did you not say they forfeited their life to him, and their liberty? And could he not sell them? And had not the Southerners a right to buy what they had a right to sell?

The second condition of legitimate Slavery is that the rights of free colored persons be respected. The moment some colored people have acquired, or possess lawful exemption from Slavery, it is as unjust to enslave them again, as it would be to enslave a white man, because the ground of slavery is not in the color of the skin, but the titles which make one the legitimate servant of another. It would be then a palpable and unreasonable violation of all justice to sell them, or to expel them from the State, or to vex and molest them merely because they are colored. There is as much injustice in vexing the free colored population, as there would be in vexing white men, either on account of their origin, because, for instance, they are Irish or German, or on account of their religion. It has been a subject of bitter mortification for the lovers of justice and humanity to learn that some State Legislatures have had before them laws for buy-

ing or selling such persons. I trust the escutcheon of Florida will not be sullied by such unjust statute, and that the love of justice in which all are equally interested, will forever prevent the attempt of such unwise legislation. Some slaveholders may imagine that the expulsion of free negroes would strengthen their tenure of slaves, but they are mistaken. Injustice will not uphold anything; injustice is a rotten prop, which will only accelerate the fall of whatever rests on it. Hence the friends of justice and order have been highly gratified at the late proceedings of the South Carolina Legislature, on the occasion of a bill which was introduced to sell free persons of color. The gentleman who had to report on the bill, following the dictates of justice, which is never more imperious and more sacred than in the case of a contest between the strong and the weak, pointed out both the injustice and the impolicy of such a measure, and concluded energetically against it in the following strain, which I can quote only in substance: "Forbid it justice, forbid it humanity, forbid it conscience. Let us not by such a glaring act of injustice disgrace our cause, and render ourselves unworthy of the smiles and countenance of the Supreme Arbitrator of all events, in this, the hour of our need." The conclusion of the report does great honor to the head and heart of those who lead politics in Charleston, and indeed there is not a more crying, cowardly, infamous tyranny than that of a strong Government on colored people, precisely because the latter are weak, defenseless, and incapable of protecting themselves.

Here is another condition I must mention in the name of morality, in the name of public decency, in the name of religion, in the name of Christianity: It is that the whites do not take advantage of the weakness, ignorance, dependence and lowly position of colored females, whether slaves or not—availing themselves of the impunity, which, hitherto, laws in the South have extended to this sort of iniquity. It is indeed right that the two races should keep distinct, and public sentiment repudiates amalgamation, and hence such connubial alliances are not to be encouraged and formed. But, things being on that footing, every outrage against morals should be repressed. It is the duty of the clergy to protest against every violation of the moral law, and by making the present remark, I discharge but too weakly and imperfectly a sacred obligation, attached to the responsible and dangerous office of Bishop, which I hold in the Church of God. I am a sincere and devoted friend of the South, to which Divine Providence has sent me, and I am ready to undergo any hardship, to make any sacrifice, for the true welfare of the people among whom I live; still I must say it for conscience sake—who knows whether the Almighty does not design to use the present disturbances for the destruction of frequent occasions of immorality, which the subservient and degraded position of the slave offers to the lewd. I hope I am a false prophet; but, at the same time, I must admonish my countrymen that obscure, secret and hidden crimes, often call for an open, public and solemn chastisement at the hands of the Supreme Moderator of events; and I must remind them that the waters of the flood, in which the whole race

of mankind was swept off, save a small remnant, were sent by the Almighty to punish an impure and lewd generation. I must remind them that Sodom and Gomorrah were consumed in a shower of burning pitch and brimstone, because of the unnatural lusts of its profligate inhabitants. It is but right that means should be taken to check libertinism and licentiousness, and that the female slave be surrounded with sufficient protection to save her from dishonor and crime. The Southern Confederacy, if it should exist, must rest on morality and justice, and it could never be entitled to a special protection from above, unless it professes to surround Slavery with the guarantees that will secure its morality and virtue.

This leads me to another condition in a subject kindred to the preceding. It is that matrimonial relations be observed among slaves, and that the laws of marriage be enforced among them. All know that there have been, and there are frightful abuses about this point, and I leave it to the conscience, reason, and good sense of any upright and virtuous man, whether God can bless a country and a state of things in which there is a woful disregard of the holy laws of marriage. It is my duty to proclaim to masters that they have indeed a right on the labor of their slaves; they can justly require of them obedience, respect and service. But they are not the masters of their slaves in such a way that they can forbid them marriage, or prescribe it at pleasure. Although they can give directions and advice to their servants on this point, still those servants are their own masters as to that. The titles to Slavery include only labor and service, but they cannot change the nature of men. It would be unnatural and foolish to suppose that the whole race is deprived of the faculty of marrying by their servile dependence; and it would be a shocking, hideous and abominable conclusion, to admit that they must live in concubinage and adultery. Hence religion and morality point out to masters a strict and rigorous duty, not only not to oppose the marriage of their servants, but to promote it, and to procure for them all the necessary means of avoiding immorality and crime. Slaves must be encouraged to marry, and the laws of marriage must be observed among them exactly as among the whites. The law of God admits of no distinction in this respect; the laws of morality are not different with the different races of men, and a state of things which is criminal with the whites, cannot be excusable with the colored people. There is but one Christian code of morality and of domestic order. Our Lord Jesus Christ has appointed laws and sacred prescriptions for marriage, which He has, indeed, raised to the dignity and excellence of a sacrament. He has not excepted anybody from the operation of these Divine laws. Divorce and polygamy must be excluded from Christians, or else the anger of God will necessarily be provoked by the violation of His laws. Slavery, to become a permanent institution of the South, must be made conform to the laws of God; a Southern Confederacy will never thrive, unless it rests upon morality and order; the Supreme Arbitrator of nations will not bless with stability and prosperity a state of things which would be a flagrant violation of His holy commandments. Hence, marriage must be established and enforced among slaves, and all the laws of Christia-

marriage must be held up to their faithful observance, as they are among the whites in every decent form of society; and the law of the apostle must apply to servants: "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled."—Heb. xiii. 4.

Another condition arises from the nature of a patriarchal society—it is that the husband and wife are joined together until death parts them. Our Saviour's word on this cannot pass away: "What God has joined together, let no man put asunder." Hence families ought never to be separated, when once established. It is unreasonable, unchristian and immortal to separate a husband from his wife and children, and to sell the husband North, and the wife South, and the children East and West. A master ought not to be allowed to do this merely for the sake of greater profit. Covetousness and cupidity would not render that conduct excusable, but would only heighten its black hue. Legitimate gain from slaves cannot be censured; but gain at the expense of morality, religion and humanity is a horror which can but bring to a speedy ruin a fabric that would rest on it and admit of it. The separation of families is fraught with evils and inconveniences which shock the moral sense of everybody at once; but in the eyes of Religion it presents yet a greater inconvenience. This married man, this married woman, now separated from each other, cannot live in continency; it would be requiring a miracle of fortitude and virtue, which cannot be expected from the generality of man, much less from a race more inclined to pleasures than any other. Indeed, the strength and violence of animal propensities is in the inverse ratio of intellectual and moral faculties, which are decidedly weaker in the African race, as all persons of experience will testify.

Hence the people will be necessarily exposed to adultery, for the laws of God cannot be set aside or ignored; the former marriage still subsists, and hence the separated parties will live in adultery and crime, and be in the impossibility of serving God and of working out their salvation. What a dreadful responsibility for any master who has not yet extinguished altogether in himself the fear of his Supreme Judge! There ought to be, therefore, a provision made and sanctioned by the civil law, to be a bar against cupidity, that families shall never be separated, and especially that the husband and wife will be looked upon as one person, inseparable and indivisible. The only exception to this law would be the commission of great crimes by one of the parties, which would render them subject to legal punishments, as imprisonment in the penitentiary, for in such cases even among the whites the husband is separated from his wife.

Among the conditions necessary to render Slavery lawful and reasonable, it is scarcely necessary to mention that the master must really and in good faith provide food, clothing and dwelling for his servants. This is the duty of the master which requires no proof, and is admitted by all, and of the South, that the slave is better fed and clothed than the free negro. There is, we know, much misrepresentation and calumny resorted to on this point by Abolitionists, their appalling stories about the hard-labouring slaves are no more than a malicious fabric.

If there have been cruel, tyrannical

hard-hearted masters, it is only a proof that there may be monsters in the human race; but these monsters are found as well in free as in slave regions. As for the generality of masters in the South, they are humane and kind, and more inclined to be too mild than too severe to their servants. This kind treatment is the necessary effect of religious feeling and practical religion among masters, and hence it ought to be the great study of ministers of religion to spread the spirit of Christianity among the people; it will do comparably more for the relief and the happiness of the slave than all the fanatical efforts of Abolitionists. This spirit of Christianity will teach the master to treat his slave with humanity and kindness, as a fellow-being, and as a partaker of the same nature, the same promises, the same hope of eternal happiness, which exalt so much the human race when received in the light of faith and Christian revelation, and hence I do nothing better than to write down here the teaching and recommendation of the inspired Apostles concerning the relative duties of masters and servants: "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not serving to the eye, as pleasing men, but in simplicity of heart, fearing God. Whatsoever you do, do it from the heart, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that you shall receive of the Lord the reward of inheritance. Serve ye the Lord Christ; for he that doeth an injury shall receive for that which he hath done unjustly, as there is no respect of persons with God. Masters, do to your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven."—Colos. iii. 22. "Servants, obey your carnal masters with fear and trembling, in the simplicity of your heart, as Christ, not serving to the eye as it were pleasing men, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God, from the heart, with a good will doing service, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that whatsoever good every one shall do, the same shall he receive from the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And you, masters, do the same things to them, forbearing threatenings, knowing that the Lord both of them and you is in Heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him."—Eph. vi. 5. "Exhort servants to be obedient to their masters, in all things pleasing, not contradicting, not defrauding, but in all things showing good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."—Tit. ii. 9. What a useful and extensive subject of meditation for servants and masters. If both come up to the requirements and exhortations of Christian morality laid down by the Apostles themselves, then servants will truly be happy, and will love and serve their masters from their hearts, and masters will also find in their servants protectors, devoted friends, loving subjects, who will take their interests to heart, and be woe like children than slaves. Such, indeed, were the servants of Abram, whose virtue, faith and religion are a theme of praise in the Sacred Scripture, who numbered three hundred and eighteen born in his house, who exposed their lives for the interests of their master, and obtained for him a glorious victory. These are the dispositions which true religion would instill in the breasts of servants, and which we would witness generally among servants, if religion presided over our families and plantations. In the absence of this element of order and peace, alas! masters have no greater fear than from their servants, and what blessing then would it not be for masters themselves, if their servants would imbibed the true and genuine

spirit of Christianity? What of Sunday work?

This leads me to the last condition which I wish to mention for the lawfulness of Slavery. It is, that servants must be provided with the means of knowing and practicing religion. This is a sacred, indispensable, bounden duty of masters, the neglect of which alone, if they had committed no other fault, would expose them to eternal damnation. Servants are moral, responsible and rational beings, accountable to the Supreme Arbiter of all things, as the masters themselves. They must save their own souls, and have, as well as their masters, no other affair worthy of the name in this world. They have an immortal soul, made to the image and likeness of God, and redeemed by the blood of Christ. The loss of such a soul is a greater misfortune than the destruction of the whole world. Man is on earth, only to save that soul by the love and service of God, and the slave has the same rights and duties as the white man: "There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Jesus Christ."—Gal. iii. 28. It is, therefore, evident that the slave must be made acquainted with everything necessary that he may save his soul. The master who has the time, and the services of his slave, is bound by natural law, as also by the divine and ecclesiastical law, to instruct his servants in their religious duties, or to have them instructed by proper persons. He has, with regard to that, the same obligations which parents contract with regard to their children. Hence it would be a great crime, and a great folly at the same time, in masters to keep their servants in ignorance of every religious doctrine; those lost souls would cry out to heaven against them for vengeance, and this flagrant injustice against the souls of slaves would be the sure way to render Slavery an untenable and ruinous institution, deserving the contempt of men, and the malediction of God. It would be treating slaves like beasts, and as this is supremely unnatural, such a state of things would be a forced and violent one, and could not stand, and God would owe it to his mercy, wisdom and justice, to bring about the speedy ruin of such an unjust and iniquitous institution. On the contrary, if the slave be taught his religion, the nature and destination of his soul, his duties to God, and the rewards as well as the chastisements of the next life, he will then act reasonably; many will follow the admonitions of the apostles, and thus the mutual happiness and satisfaction of servants and masters will be surely and efficaciously promoted. A Christian and religious master may easily become a most effectual missionary, enforcing among his servants, by his words and examples, the love of morality and virtue, gaining them to God, and by his kindness winning their affection and love. He will thus be served far better in this world, and will be the instrument of the eternal happiness of many in the next world, which is indeed the highest aim of human ambition. Happy are masters who own those slaves, and happier

are the servants who belong to them. *The number of such masters is not large; but we have known some who had truly upon this, the Christian Spirit, and did not hesitate to sacrifice one afternoon every week, calling in a Clergyman to give their servants once a week, a homely and familiar instruction adapted to their wants, besides the Sunday which they had free for the performance of their religious duties.*

The subject which I have presented today to your consideration, beloved brethren, is one of great importance, and is to have a powerful influence over the stability of the Southern Confederacy. Such a Confederacy will, to all appearance, be formed, and such is the rapid march of events, that *the dismemberment of the Union is already consummated*, and the faint hopes of a permanency of the Union, which existed yet when the first pages of this paper were written, have altogether vanished, and the new flag of the Southern Confederacy is now given to the breeze, and waves under my eyes. Now if that Confederacy is meant to be solid, durable, stable and permanent, it must rest upon justice and morality. "Justice exalteth a nation, but sin maketh nations miserable." It is undoubtedly true that the law of God does not reprove Slavery; it is undoubtedly true that now the sudden and abrupt manumission of slaves would be a misfortune of appalling magnitude, more so yet for the slave than for the master. Let, then, the wise and the virtuous unite and combine their prudence, their patriotism, their humanity and their religious integrity to divest Slavery of the features which would make it odious to God and man. Now is the time to make a salutary reform, and to enact judicious regulations.

I propose, as the means of setting the new Confederacy upon a solid basis, that a servitude be drawn up and adopted by the Confederacy, defining clearly the rights and duties of masters, and the rights and duties of slaves. This will be the means of proving to the world that the South is on the side of justice, morality, reason and religion. This will be a just vindication of Southern views sanctioned by the Great Arbitrer of nations; this will be a most triumphant confutation of the charges which bigotry, ignorance, fanaticism and malice, cloaked under a reverend garb, have for years heaped against Southern institutions.

We have assembled to humble ourselves under the remembrance of our manifold transgressions. The subject which has been presented to you on this occasion affords to the North and to the South just subjects of humiliation, sorrow, confusion and humble accusation before the Supreme Ruler. Let us, beloved brethren, accompany these sentiments of humiliation and grief with great confidence in the mercy of God, who often permits transitory sufferings in order to derive from them substantial and lasting good. Let us remember how the Jews, under Esther, having recourse to penance and prayer, were saved miraculously from their enemies, who themselves fell into the pit they had dug for their offending brethren. Let us remember how the threats against Nineveh were averted by the humiliation and penance of the people, and let us hope, in the midst of the sad forebodings which reach us every day, and in the midst of the rumors and cries of civil war which seem to grow every day nearer and nearer, that Providence, who has in his hands the hearts of kings, rulers and statesmen, will avert calamities from our heads, or at least grant us the grace of so profiting by the temporal evils to which we may be subjected, that by patience, resignation, sub-

mission to the will of heaven, we may expiate our past faults, cancel at least a part of the debt we owe to Divine Justice, and render ourselves worthy of the eternal happiness which is promised to the true servants of God in the next world.

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