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INTRODUCTION.

FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN. The holders of slaves in ~~this~~ republic cry out with one consent, '*The Immediate Abolitionists must be put down.*' Doubtless they *must*, or Slavery *must* be relinquished. Terrible systems of injustice may go forward smoothly, so long as *truth* can be kept under lock and key. But the troubler is abroad. She has whispered in the ears of thousands what they cannot forget. She has asked some hard questions about the "names of things." Is the man who takes your watch, without your consent, a thief or a robber, or what is he? 'Amen,' say the people 'he is any thing but honest and honorable.' Well, if he had cut deeper in his process, and taken with the watch the owner—the bird, nest and all—what then? Here, in a nutshell, is the whole issue upon which depends the destiny of one sixth part of our nation. Truth has hinted a *name*.—'Avaunt there,' say the tribe of conservatives, 'we have nothing to do with your logic or your abstractions, we look at the *consequences*. Whether a man is to be called a *thief* or a *robber* depends upon the *consequences*. If you push this question and urge the analogical answer, making slaveholders consummate adepts in conduct which usually falls under the denomination of villany, you jeopard the public safety, *you sunder the Union*—nay, you put the abolition of slavery itself at a hopeless distance.'

slave! Merciful and most conscientious oppressor! Let us be favored with thy plea.—It is this.—“If the slave should be freed by me, the cruel laws (against which I have never remonstrated nor voted) would instantly apprehend and sell him again into slavery, to a less kind and christian-like master.”—In other words “If I should leave off sinning, somebody else would sin the more greedily: and so I must continue to oppress my neighbor a little, lest some one else should oppress him still more.”—We must search further for the *pure motive* of holding any human being in the condition of an American slave! Can that motive be supplied by the beneficent and reforming influences of such an example, on the mass of mankind? Can it be found in the honor it confers on the Christian profession—on the support it gives to the sanctions of pure religion—on the revenue of glory it secures to our one Father and Master in Heaven! Alas! No! The pretense is all false and hollow: putrid and rotten to the core. It abides not the scrutiny of impartial men. How then can it stand before the bar of the all-seeing God?

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#### A REVIEW.—THE PRINCIPLES OF REFORM.

BY REV. SERIAH GREEN, PRESIDENT OF ONEIDA INSTITUTE.

ART. X. On Political and Ecclesiastical Reform. Lit. and Theol. Review, No. VI.

THE divisions which prevail among professed christians on questions, touching the very vitals of our civil and religious institutions, seem sadly to perplex and sorely to try those confiding brethren, who have been accustomed without hesitation or fear, to tread in the foot-prints of “great and good men.” The authority, on which they used to rely, they begin to regard as a feeble, perhaps a broken staff. The movements of their “great and good men,” embarrass and distract them. The objects, plans and methods, which in some cases enlist the feelings and call forth the exertions of one, another regards with abhorrence. Such divisions present a problem peculiarly dark and difficult to those who have rather consented to be swayed by names, than chosen to be controlled by principles.

We know of one way only, in which minds thus embarrassed, can hope to find effectual relief. A careful survey,

and thorough examination of the *principles* of their accredited teachers and guides, may enable them to form a just estimation of the right and worth of their authority. The tendency and character of an action or habit, in itself doubtful, may, when contemplated in the light of the principle from which it proceeded, appear clear and certain. The conduct of any man, great or small, when thus examined becomes intelligible. On any question of great practical importance, where professed philanthropists are divided, we have to acknowledge a public benefit in any fair exposition of his principles, which a man of high authority and commanding influence may see fit to make. And if we are sure, that he presents the views and opinions of a large and respectable portion of the community, to which we belong, we cannot but feel that he has laid us under increased obligations. We cannot but thank him for the light which he has kindly shed upon the character and movements of those professed friends of humanity, who, while they claimed our sympathy and cooperation in their designs, left us in doubt of the justness and strength of their claims. We are indebted to him for the removal of our doubts. We now see, with *whom*, we are invited to act; and *what* they are intent upon doing.

Under just such obligations as have now been described, has the editor of the Literary and Theological Review laid us in a paper "on Political and Ecclesiastical Reform." We will not be so ungrateful, as to withhold the thanks to which he is manifestly entitled. The train of thought, to which, as a part of his readers, he invites our attention, is certainly deeply interesting and highly instructive. If we are not greatly gratified, we certainly must be much obliged, with the announcement of maxims, principles, doctrines;—with the description of objects, designs, methods;—with the development of spirit, which Mr. Woods makes in the article just alluded to; and in which, we suppose, he coincides with a large majority of those who assist in supporting his journal. The article of Mr. Woods, whose title we have given, deserves, we think, an attentive perusal, and a thorough examination. On some of the things which it contains, we shall suggest a few thoughts to assist our readers, so far as we are able, to form a just estimation of the aims, plans, spirit and exertions, which on high authority, are commended to our consideration, confidence and adoption.

When Mr. Woods affirms, that "the fundamental institutions of government and religion" "were intended for the public good alone;" that this object demands, that they should be carefully adapted to the rising wants and advancing stages of human society; that unless they are to be continually *revolutionized*, they must be continually *reformed*; when he finds ground for this necessity in the unfitness of arrangements, suited to the infancy of the world, for its maturity, and in a proclivity in both civil and religious institutions, through the depravity of those by whom and for whom, they are administered, to run into various abuses, by which, they become scourges instead of blessings; when he places the aim and standard of the work of reform in that blissful state, in which nothing shall hurt or molest; and to this work, wisely conducted, assigns the highest place among all the departments of human beneficence; when he asserts, that in a state of imperfection like ours, the business of doing good seems of necessity, for the most part, to take the shape of reform; and when he throws out the hint, distinctly and pointedly, that it is the intermission of the work of reform, which produces, by and by, the necessity of revolution, he says nothing, to which we cannot give our hearty and full assent. An exposition, so clear and forcible, of the principles and doctrines, which must lie at the very basis of any well-directed effort to improve the character, condition and prospects of mankind, we cannot but regard, as well timed and of great worth. In the paragraphs, from which the above quotations were taken, Mr. Woods addresses us in a style and spirit, worthy of the place he holds, and of the responsibilities he has assumed. The position which he here took, is so attractive and commanding, that we cannot help pausing awhile, to observe it.

1. How high the "aim," to which he lifts the reformer's eye, and how exact the "standard," to which he teaches him to adjust his designs and exertions! The introduction of that "blissful state, in which nothing shall hurt or molest," is the sublime object, with which he is to be continually engaged. In whatever he may do or attempt for the benefit of those, to whom he may be related, his pathway must lie along on the line of perfect rectitude. He is not to be driven aside from his aim, or diverted from his chosen track by the senseless sneers or malignant taunts of any who may see fit

to hold him up to public scorn, as a "visionary enthusiast," or a citizen of "Utopia." He knows, well enough, that unless his STANDARD BE CORRECT, his exertions will not even TEND to the accomplishment of good. In his objects, plans and efforts, therefore, he keeps his eye kindled and his heart a glowing with the transforming and enrapturing vision of that "blissful state, in which nothing shall hurt or molest;" well assured, that in no other way can he contribute any thing towards "softening down the harsh contrast now existing between the *actual* and the *ideal*," which he rejoices to know "will finally be lost sight of, in the full establishment of the kingdom of Heaven, upon the earth."

2. In what just and impressive language does Mr. Woods describe the necessity, under which the reformer is placed, incessantly and vigorously to employ himself in his appropriate work! He is not content with *asserting* the necessity; he conducts us to the ground, from which it springs. The progress of human affairs demands frequently the readjustment of human arrangements. Provision must be made, continually and liberally, for the "rising wants and advancing stages of human society." *Reform*, neglected or resisted, opens the way for *revolution*. Human depravity, moreover, Mr. Woods will not permit us to forget, is continually busy in making work for the hands of the reformer. So "various are the abuses," which it works into "both civil and religious institutions," that, unless restrained, it may reduce even such "blessings" into "scourges." Indeed, Mr. W. would have us understand, that the "proclivity" to such results as he speaks of, is something more than a metaphysical abstraction. It has found body, life and action in "the evils, which man *has suffered and continues to suffer*, from the abuse of the civil and ecclesiastical power, ordained for his benefit." These evils, Mr. Woods ventures with startling emphasis, to assert, "are *immeasurably greater* than those, which have befallen him from *any other source*," and adds, as a natural and just inference—an inference of the most *practical* character—that "the call for their correction is proportionably loud;"—that is "*immeasurably*" louder than the call for the correction of evils, arising from "any other source." The most eager, bold and strenuous reformer, could hardly find language more pointed and powerful, to describe the work, to which he had devoted his time and his strength.

3. The work of reform, we are much pleased to find, Mr. W. regards as naturally appropriate to every man, woman and child, who may engage in "the business of doing good." To the doctrine which he here teaches, we most heartily subscribe. It is, in our view, clearly the doctrine of the bible. It is delightful to hear Mr. W. say, "*Indeed in a state of imperfection like ours, the business of doing good, seems of necessity, to take, for the most part, the shape of reform.*" What a wide field of exertion is here thrown open before us! What various and exhausting labors are we here required to perform! How extended the harvest, here to be gathered. Here is a work, which for "the most part," comprehends, ay, "*of necessity*" comprehends the "business of doing good." Who, then, may engage in a work so heavenly and honorable?—so benign in its tendencies, so happy in its influence, so useful in its results, that Mr. W. is disposed to assign to it, the "highest place among all the departments of human beneficence." Who? Why EVERY MAN, who would expend his resources, and employ his powers, "in the business of doing good." From this business, he must "*of necessity*," for "the most part," be excluded, if he refuses to be a reformer. And how can he refuse? What, refuse to aid in removing those evils, which have fallen upon afflicted humanity with a crushing force, "*immeasurably greater*" than those that have befallen it "*from any other source*"! And this, when "the call to this work is immeasurably louder" than any other which falls upon his ear, and demands his activity! He must then, whoever he may be—be a stupid, or sordid, or cowardly wretch, who is dead to the wants and woes of human nature, though weltering in its own blood!

4. The application of his doctrine "to the enemies of seasonable and needful changes," Mr. W. ventures boldly to make. Upon these "obstinate conservatives of every abuse," he seasonably and earnestly urges the startling thought, that *to them* "the horrors of revolution are to be charged, more than to the infatuated multitude, who are its immediate agents and victims." This we regard as a fair application of a sound and weighty doctrine. Let every man who refuses to engage in the work of reform—a work "which" Mr. W. well reminds us, "*needs to be as incessant as the insidious encroachments of corruption*,"—take it home to his inmost soul, before it falls in thunder-claps upon his ears. We

pray God to save us from a condemnation so just and dreadful, as Mr. W. warns us to beware of! In behalf of all his readers, we thank him for his well-timed and pointed admonition.

We are now to contemplate Mr. W. in a new position. How he arrived there, we are quite at a loss to determine. The maxims, doctrines, and movements, which in the one position and the other, he proposes and commends, seem to us to be subversive of each other. Among the arts of sophistry few are better adapted to mislead and embarrass than the art of making distinctions on the one hand, where none in reality exist; and on the other, of confounding things, which naturally stand separate from each other. In this art, we are sorry to say, Mr. W. deserves the reputation of a distinguished adept. He finds it convenient to make a marked distinction between the "immediate offices of religion" and the "function of the true reformer." Both he invests with such an air of awfulness, as might be supposed to hang over the ruins of the Holy of Holies. In the spirit of the solemn bird of night screaming among such ruins, Mr. W. warns "*the unbidden*" to beware of the "profaneness" of "meddling with the fundamental institutions of civil government and religion." To what, we humbly ask, does this distinction with the terrific conclusion, appended to it, amount? In the light, which Mr. W. himself has shed upon it, we hesitate not to pronounce it infinitely less than an airy abstraction. In "meddling" with the institutions of religion, according to Mr. W., the authorized reformer discharges a "function" almost as "high and sacred" as "the immediate offices of religion"! In the work of reform Luther and Calvin and Knox occupied ground almost as high and sacred, as that, to which the "immediate offices of religion" naturally conducted them! And so, the "function" of a religious reformer is no religious "office"! And yet that "function," though less high and sacred than a religious office, "unbidden hands" must beware of assuming, lest they involve themselves *almost* in the guilt of sacrilege! If any reader supposes, that we wrong Mr. W. in ascribing to him such nonsense, let him read and "inwardly digest" such statements as the following: "If it is true as we believe, that after the immediate offices of religion, there is no function on earth higher or more sacred than that of

the true reformer, it follows, that after sacrilege, there is nothing more profane, than with rash and unbidden hands to meddle with the fundamental institutions of civil government and religion." Now along by the side of this, let us lay the following statements of Mr. W. in the same paper, and contemplate their mutual bearing on each other. "To a wise political or ecclesiastical reform, we are disposed to assign the highest place among all the departments of human beneficence. *Indeed in a state of imperfection like ours, THE BUSINESS OF DOING GOOD SEEMS OF NECESSITY to take, for the most part, THE SHAPE OF REFORM.*" Those who are *bidden to do good must* then, if they would obey God, be "for the most part," REFORMERS; and reformers too in matters "political and ecclesiastical." To place this matter in a clear light, a scene like the following may not be altogether inappropriate. An inquirer, intent on "doing good," with marked modesty and deep reverence approaches Mr. Woods.

Inquirer. Reverend Sir, I profess to be a christian. My Bible has strongly fastened the conviction upon my mind, that to the "business of doing good," I am unceasingly, heartily, and strenuously to devote all my powers and resources. Will you, as a public teacher, kindly suggest to me the *modes*, in which I am to expend my strength?

Mr. Woods. "In a state of imperfection like ours, the business of doing good seems of necessity to take, for the most part, *the SHAPE of reform.*"

Inquirer. I am charged then with the responsibilities of a reformer. These responsibilities are laid upon me by the strong hand of "*necessity.*" There is no escape from their pressure. Let me then in the spirit of my profession welcome them. From this day onward to the close of my connection with "a state of imperfection like ours," be it mine, as a reformer, to maintain an incessant warfare with evil, under every form and name; and as my "aim and standard" to endeavor to raise human nature to "that blissful state, in which nothing shall hurt or molest."

Mr. Woods. Take care what you do! You ought to be "aware of the difference between an ideal and real republic, and that it is far easier to adjust the plastic and aerial elements of the former to fine spun theories, than the grosser and intractable materials of the latter." I charge you,



*solemnly* charge you to remember, that "after the immediate offices of religion there is no function on earth higher or more sacred than that of the true reformer." Take home then to your inmost soul the awful admonition, that "after sacrilege, there is nothing more profane, than with rash and unbidden hands to meddle with the fundamental institutions of civil government and religion.

Inquirer. Sir, you greatly shock and embarrass me. What am I to do? I pant to engage in the "business of doing good." Such desires moreover accord with—nay, spring from those convictions, which my Bible has wrought into the very texture of my spirit. You have taught me, that if I would do good, I *must* act the part of a reformer. As such, you bade me "aim" at nothing less than the introduction of that "blissful state, in which nothing shall hurt or molest." And now, about to give myself with a "hearty good will" to action, you direct my eye from so high an aim and deter me from so good a work, by trying to scare me with sepulchral groans about "unbidden hands," and "profaneness," and almost "sacrilege." If my exertions do not take the shape of reform—and reform too in matters "political and ecclesiastical," for these you yourself expressly specify—I must for ought I can see, for the "most part of *necessity*" do just nothing at all or give up myself to "the business of doing" *evil*. Would you ply me with temptation such as the honorable mayor\* of a certain great city, "in the precincts of that august temple, where law and religion sit enthroned," urged upon a colored man of integrity and enterprize? His honor would not permit him to engage

\* The following is an exact report of a conversation which took place in one of our cities between the magistrate who grants licenses and a colored man who applied for a *license* to drive a cart.

- C. Will your honor grant me a license to drive a cart.  
 M. Are there any colored men who drive carts?  
 C. I do not know, sir.  
 M. It is not customary for colored men to drive carts.  
 C. Not if they can produce as good recommendations of character as white men?  
 M. Let me see your recommendation. It is a very good one, but ——  
 C. Is it good enough to obtain a license to sell rum, sir.  
 M. O yes: go to the alderman of the ward in which you live and he will attend to it, we grant colored men tavern licenses.  
 C. I don't want to sell rum, sir, I want to get an honest living. Is my unfortunate color the cause of your honor's refusing to grant me a license to get an honest living?  
 M. I cannot hold any argument on that subject; it will not change my mind.  
 —[See Anti-Slavery Record, vol. I, p. 68.]

in a useful employment, for which he was strongly recommended as well qualified ; but his honor was quite ready to *license him to sell rum!*

In *opposition to Mr. Woods*, we shall not hesitate to take *the part of Mr. Woods* in saying, that any such distinction as he makes between the offices of religion and the function of the reformer must be as mischievous as it is groundless. It is the act "of an enemy," to break up the christian community into castes, on the ground, that the appropriate work of some is too high and sacred to be approached by others. Is there in Heaven or on earth any employment more honorable or holy than the "*business of doing good*"? And is any man to be deterred from this by the notes of some officious night-bird dolefully screaming in his ears, "*profaneness*," "*sacrilege*"? It is very true, that every man should seek to occupy a station, suited to his talents and acquirements. But he is bound, whoever he may be and wherever and however he may exert himself, to bring his entire being, in every design and in every movement into full and direct subserviency to the great object, for which Jehovah lives and reigns. Whatever may be his sphere of action, he thus becomes in the noblest sense of the phrase, *a priest of the most high God*. It is profane—it is sacrilegious for any of his fellow-laborers, to thrust him away from the altar on the ground, that he is a "common and unclean thing," and brings his offering with "unbidden hands." Magisterial pride and sacerdotal insolence may rudely interfere with him, in "the business of doing good." "Lording it over the heritage of God," they may try to break up his plans and counteract his exertions, on the pretence, that reform is a work too high and sacred for him. But this they cannot do, while he remembers the dignity, and privileges, and responsibilities of his high calling: "*Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.*"

"The fundamental institutions of civil government and of religion" are not "to be meddled with with unbidden hands." Who are they, that bring this warning to our ears? Are they an order of superior beings, shining with angel wings? No. They are our own brethren and fellows. How came they to hold the offices, political or

ecclesiastical, to which they may have been raised? Our readers may remember the rebuke, by which the bloated Justice of the peace was suddenly reduced to his proper size, when, not knowing what he did, he turned up his nose at William Penn. "My friend here," said the travelling companion of the insulted governor; "*My friend here MAKES such things as thou art.*" The unprivileged classes among us may choose to remember, that they *made* those big, noisy things, that are so loth to be "meddled with." And if instead of securing the sympathy and aid of guardian angels, they have been calling spirits from "the vasty deep" to haunt, and worry, and devour them, they have indeed been ill-employed.

If in this country, the "fundamental institutions of civil government and religion" were to have any "seasonable and needful changes" wrought into them, will Mr. Woods tell us *by whom* they may be fairly "meddled with." If he would not think it "profaneness" in us amounting almost to "sacrilege" to propose such a problem, we would say; suppose, that the constitution of the United States should need some emendation. After leaving out of the account all "unbidden hands," upon whom would this task, so "high and sacred," devolve? What a number of reformers in this case would "of necessity" come forward in every part of the republic to occupy their places in this elevated "department of human beneficence"! Suppose in any of the New England States—say Maine, where Mr. Woods may yet occupy the chair of a theological professor, the work of reform should be applied to the institutions of religion; will Mr. Woods inform us how many *bidden* hands would naturally—nay "of necessity" be employed in this "function"? Amidst his German authors, whom we blame him not for studying, Mr. Woods seems in writing the article under review to have forgotten, under what sort of government he lived. We are tempted to suppose, that a fond preference for its arrangements had somehow conducted him in imagination into the midst of "*the Prussian Government*"?—a government, which like an *iron bedstead*, if modified at all, may very probably be "*gradually*" reformed. We hope, that before he takes his leave of the emperor, he will visit the good NEANDER; and catch enough of his spirit, to become ashamed of the distinction, he makes, between the

function of an ecclesiastical reformer and the offices of religion.

Why should the truth, as obvious as it is important, ever be forgotten, that the efficiency, nay, the very *life* of our political and ecclesiastical institutions depends under God upon public sentiment? In opposition to this, what civil or religious arrangement can be maintained? What are constitutions, what are statutes, when the breath "of the people" ceases to animate them? The roll of parchment or the printed page may preserve the form of them in full size and solemn pace. But neither the page nor the parchment will in this case give us the history of the living, but the epitaph of the dead. What in a country like this is law against the will of the people? A dead letter, clearly. Now, we ask, where is the man, who has no share in forming, and therefore no responsibility for the character and tendency of, *public sentiment*? Why, what is public sentiment? What, but the views and feelings of a community, generally and comprehensively considered? Who maintain these views; who cherish these feelings? Some superior being, who in awful state sits apart from human creatures; unapproachable, formidable, immutable? So they seem to think, who, as they approach the deep darkness in which this divinity of their imagination is veiled, "lay their hands upon their mouths and their mouths in the dust;" reverently waiting for the oracle to speak, that they may echo every solemn syllable it may mutter. These are the men who quake at the thought of getting in advance of public sentiment; who, like dead fish in a stream, passively follow wherever it may lead. Those, who, maintain the views and cherish the feelings, which compose public sentiment in any community are the men, women, and children of which that community is made. *Each of these at every breath affects public sentiment.* It is not only accessible to them all; but all are continually and "of necessity" engaged in modifying and moulding it. Wax before the fire is not more yielding. Now for the work of reformation. A plain farmer finds good reasons to conclude, that alcoholic drinks are injurious to the human constitution. But what shall he do? The minister, the squire, and the deacon all "take a little" for the sake of their dear stomachs. If *he* refuses, he will commence a reformation. At the hazard of being classed with the "profane" for

attempting a work so high and sacred, he ventures to dash the tempting poison to the ground. But his sons and workmen; may he give them his reasons for totally abstaining from the use of alcohol? This would be to take a second step in the progress of reform. He trembles at the thought of "sacrilege" in thus approaching what might be regarded as the "offices of religion"; but he trembles more lest his sons should stumble into drunkards' graves. The deacon will not speak; the squire will not speak; the minister will not speak. Public sentiment is in favor of alcohol. But *he* cannot keep silence. He exposes the noxious influence and damning tendency of intoxicating liquor, and banishes it from his fields and table. Now he begins to feel a tender and lively concern for one of his "near neighbors," who has just mortgaged his farm to the rum-seller. He modestly suggests to the squire, he humbly intreats the minister, to try to rouse his poor neighbor to the dangers, multiplied and frightful, which are thickening around him. But they very gravely warn the unofficial advocate of temperance to beware of "a childish and feverish impatience for immediate results"; and bid him maintain "a manly composure and serene confidence in the ultimate prevalence of right over wrong";—in other words, a dignified indifference to the wants and woes of the vicious and degraded. But our farmer's heart is not fat enough for that: and so with a heavy spirit and a tearful eye, he undertakes the work, which the justice and the divine are too serene and composed to attempt. He meets with happy success in his noble design; and greatly encouraged and cheered, he advances from step to step in the work of reform, until the way is opened for the "best part" of the parish to come together and form a temperance society. He is now at length happily delivered from the danger of involving himself in the guilt of profaneness or sacrilege; for the squire condescendingly enters on the "function" of president of the new association and the minister piously takes upon himself the "religious offices" thereof.

Take another case. In traveling in Kentucky, a young man from New-York becomes thoroughly convinced, that slave-holding is a crime. In conversation with a gentleman of Kentucky, whose hospitality he enjoys, he gives expression to his views and feelings. He breaks up the "serenity

and composure" of his host, who, stung with conscious guilt, emancipates his slaves. Alarmed and irritated, his neighbors demand his reasons for the step, they have seen him take. He frankly and clearly and fully explains the grounds of the proceeding, which had so perplexed and embarrassed them. But what is the result? Why, one and another of his neighbors, after a short and violent struggle with their pride and selfishness, enter into his views and feelings. They all knock the fetters from the heels of their bondmen; and to extend and increase their influence in the cause of holy freedom, form themselves into an anti-slavery society. Now the work of reform advances apace, and attracts general attention. The greatest obstacles to its speedy and glorious consummation are thrown in its way by those men of high authority in church and state, whose composure\* and serenity are never disturbed by the tears and groans, and blood of the oppressed; but who are always thrown into "a childish and fevered impatience, regardless alike of public faith and private rights," whenever they witness any decided effort to promote the welfare of the suffering and the dumb.

The plain truth is, that every man, woman, and child, on finding himself involved in "evil doing" is bound by obligations as high and sacred as the authority of God, immediately to "break off his sin by righteousness." Under the same obligations, he must do "what he can" to bring others to harmonize with him in views, feelings, and action. He will thus "of necessity" extend his influence to a circle continually widening. Others feeling the force of his convictions, will take their position by his side; others again by theirs; till scores, hundreds, thousands occupy common ground with him. This is a just description of the work of reform. It may commence with the obscurest child in the community, and ultimately reach the gravest philosopher or statesman, or divine. If we are not mistaken, we have the authority of church history for saying, that christianity has often in this way exerted its influence and diffused its benefits. The most important reformations have thus begun

\* "Why should I care"? The reverend doctor of divinity, who was the "humble instrument" of doing so much to bring to the birth that "twin sister," (as he styled it) of the *American Bible Society*:—viz. the *American Colonization Society*. This society seems to have had its origin in a why-should-I-care spirit about the miseries of the slave.

with the sewing-maid in the kitchen. Let no one then be deterred from acting the part of a reformer by the senseless insinuation, from whatever bloated body it may proceed, that "the scribes and pharisees have not believed on him."

Mr. Woods, not only makes needless and mischievous distinctions, inconsistent with the ground, which he himself had been maintaining; he also in the same breath unhappily confounds things, which should have been carefully distinguished, this he does in his vague and general description of "*radicalism*." With the very name of this, how is he horror-struck!—a name we doubt not, of dreadful import to most of his refined and polished readers. Mr. Woods seems well enough to know, that "in a state of imperfection like ours," *names* go a great way in making things attractive or repulsive; and that they often then produce the most effect when they are least understood. He doubtless has seen and heard, amidst the roar and rush of a New-York mob the practical bearing of such appellations, as "fanatics," "incendiaries," "black mormons of the East," liberally bestowed upon some of his most intelligent fellow-citizens and devoted fellow-christians by *distinguished gentlemen* under the protection of a public sentiment, themselves had been active in forming. Perhaps he would shudder at the thought of conducting the popular mind from names to things, lest with "profane and unbidden hands" he should assume the "function of a reformer." At any rate, after all he says about "*radicalism*," we are left to grope in vain for something definite amidst the darkness of his generalities.

The defects, which in any institution may attract the attention and demand the hand of the reformer, may be either 1, arrangements, which in the progress of things from one point in the history of a community to another *have become unnecessary and useless*. Or, 2, arrangements, in which important objects are *awkwardly and unskilfully pursued*.—In the construction and furniture of a church, in the dress, position, mode of instruction, maintained by the preacher, time and taste may have made many things useless, which were once deemed highly important. Moreover a good end may be sought by a round-about and tedious process. What can be more important than public prayer? *Unhappy modes* may, however, be prescribed and adopted. And yet

a strong attachment may prevail among a people both to the useless and the awkward. The "blessed wig" and venerable three-cornered hat of the preacher may in the minds of many have become intimately associated with the great Bible. Others may hardly know how, especially in public, to pray without the prayer-book. In such cases, we are ready to admit, that the "true reformer" would proceed with great caution gradually to remove the defects, which called for his skill and efforts. But 3, an institution may be marked by defects of a very different character. *Arrangements directly and flagrantly at variance with the divine requisitions may arrest the attention and rouse the spirit of the "true reformer."* Such arrangements he will regard as nothing less than *specific modes of sinning*. And from whatever exigencies they may seem to have arisen; by whatever authority they may claim to be sustained; and however they may have been forced into unnatural union with other things, he will not for a moment shew them the slightest favor. He knows well enough, that there can be no mode—there can be no time, in which sin can be well committed:—that the rights of God or man cannot be so invaded—under some such happy modification or at such a happy juncture—as to render the act innocent and tolerable. He knows full well, that sin, under all its forms, in all its relations, and with all its influences and tendencies is hurtful, only hurtful, and hurtful continually. Whatever it touches, it distorts, pollutes, and blasts. If it has been permitted or encouraged—no matter by whom or on what occasion—to creep into any institution, political or ecclesiastical—he knows that it must work mischief there during every moment of its continuance. It is like some quick and deadly poison in the human system. With every throb of the heart, it more deeply and fatally infects the blood. Where such defects are concerned, the true reformer is a stern, unsparing, and determined *radicalist*. He applies "the axe to the roots" of the evil. He abhors the thought, of spending his time and strength and skill in modifying sin. He would as soon attempt to transform "Satan into an angel of light" by the application of paint and varnish. Delicately modify—gradually ameliorate as you will; *sin remains sin*—malignant, hurtful, noxious. And a reformation, any where and at any time, which consists in reducing



the form and softening the features of rebellion against God may be justly described in the plain, homely, pointed language of *Jonathan Edwards* : It is letting into the place of a black devil seven white ones.

We hope we may be forgiven if we frankly say, what we deeply feel, that the christian cause is greatly injured by the marked and obvious inconsistency of some of the professed advocates of the doctrine of immediate repentance. For the maintenance and prevalence of this doctrine *in the abstract*, they are zealous enough. If a grave and dignified metaphysician, under the pressure of such responsibilities as a professor's chair in a theological school imposes on him, ventures however cautiously to describe the states of mind, which, not, as he reminds us, in the order of time but of nature succeed each other in repentance, what an alarm is taken and sounded! Warnings loud and frequent ring through the land, That *heresy in the form of the DOCTRINE OF GRADUAL REPENTANCE* is "coming in like a flood." And yet denouncers and denounced; the orthodox and the heretic can join hands in *PRACTICALLY* maintaining this very doctrine in the worst form, it could well assume. Violations of the rights of God and man—open, habitual, flagrant—they see reduced to a system horribly strong and regular;—a system defended in the pulpit and applauded in the legislature; and the moment their own doctrine of immediate repentance is applied to the supporters of this system, they start back with horror. Alas, they exclaim, this will never do. It is carrying things quite too far. And then the hurtful tendencies and mischievous effects of preaching and practising this doctrine are described in language as grave, as pointed, as emphatic, as the exposure and reprobation of the worst heresy in the world could require! Of all this, what a striking illustration we have in the alarm and opposition, which the doctrines and designs and movements of the friends of immediate emancipation have produced! What have these men done;—what do they propose to do? Why, they have shown in the clearest and most certain light, that slave-holding is *a sin*—a giant crime, most malignant, hateful and destructive; that repentance only can save us from its damning guilt and deadly tendencies; that repentance should be exercised without the least delay, and should, therefore, be immediately, earnestly, promptly urged

upon the conscience of every man, woman, and child, who is concerned directly or indirectly in supporting or countenancing the oppression of the enslaved. In accordance with the convictions they feel, and the doctrines they maintain, they have resolved under God *to act*. They are, therefore, laboring with some degree of zeal and effect, to persuade their fellow-citizens, and especially their fellow-christians, to unite with them in rescuing, by means authorized by the Bible and countenanced by the political institutions of their country, the bondman from the grasp of the oppressor. All their plans and exertions are carefully and fully adjusted to the doctrine of immediate repentance. For these things how many of the professed advocates of this doctrine have been forward to deride, malign, and oppose them!

Mr. Woods complains, that the spirit of radicalism is driving out of "many of our colleges and theological seminaries those dispositions, which become all students, especially students in divinity." How much and what he meant by this ill-natured insinuation, it is not for us to guess. We can easily suppose a case. A professor of divinity, remarkable for his ingenuity, and occasional display of warmth, elasticity and force of mind, with a high reputation for theological learning and pulpit eloquence, finds himself surrounded by "students in divinity," whom he is to mould for the labors of the pulpit. In lofty strains and with great power, he urges them to hold with a strong grasp and proclaim with a loud voice the doctrine of immediate repentance. Deal with sinners, I hear him say, deal with sinners of all sorts only on the basis of this doctrine. Bring them to see and feel, that now is the time to renounce and abandon their iniquities. Give them no quarter. You may preach *gradual* repentance till dooms'-day and have nothing but your pains for your labor. Every word the grave professor utters in this strain falls on open ears—finds free access to their inmost hearts. Like men of business, they resolve to act upon the doctrine of their revered instructor. At length, amidst their various investigations of the different subjects, which claim their attention, they become thoroughly convinced, that slaveholding is a sin. Some of their own number are at present or in prospect slave-holders; and all are directly or indirectly and in various ways connected

with the system of oppression, which they cannot but regard as equally wicked, infamous, and destructive. They immediately take measures to bring the doctrine of immediate repentance to bear upon this whole matter. With filial confidence and love, they seek the sympathy, and countenance, and aid of their instructor, who had so eloquently and effectually impressed upon their minds the doctrine, on which they are now acting. But alas, they are disappointed, mortified, and shocked to find, that the reverend doctor is disposed to shrink from the practical application of the truth, of which, as an abstract affair, he was so zealous and so able an advocate. The threatening attitude of angry sinners in his vicinity has already filled him with alarm and affright. He exhorts the "students of divinity," who have disturbed the consciences of these transgressors to desist. Nay, he lends his countenance to measures, which are designed to force them to hold their tongues and stop their efforts! Such treatment, we should think, might well be expected to "drive out before it those dispositions, which become all students, especially students of divinity." Perhaps Mr. W. had his eye on some such case, as we have been supposing.

In this connection, we shall be permitted to say, that we were much surprised with a reference, which in describing the position of the true reformer at the commencement of his career, Mr. Woods professes to make "to the Scriptures." The phraseology, he employs enabled us to determine with tolerable certainty what passage, he would recall to our thoughts. By comparing that passage with his statement, our readers can hardly fail to perceive how much confidence and credit he is entitled to, for his conscientiousness and accuracy in using scriptural authority.

**MR. WOODS.**

"According to the Scriptures, he (the true reformer) makes his stand UPON the ancient way; THENCE he looks about, to discover what is the right way, and so walks in it."

**JEREMIAH vi. 16.**

Thus saith the Lord; Stand ye IN THE WAYS, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.

Mr. Woods, in accordance with the public sentiment of the circle, to which he seems "for better or for worse" to have attached himself, places his reformer UPON the ancient way; the Scriptures bid him stand at the point, where "the ways" meet—"in the WAYS." From the ancient way Mr.

Woods' reformer looks about to discover the "right way"; whereas, according to the Scriptures, the phrases "old paths" and "good way" describe the same road. Mr. Woods and his authority however happily agree in describing the reformer as something more than a "tongue-valiant" hero, who is eager bravely to expend never so much wind in contending with naughty abstractions;—he resolutely "WALKS THEREIN" when his eyes are once blessed with the sight of "*the good way*"—though in so doing, he may be obliged to walk away from a "theological seminary." "According to the Scriptures," we are required amidst conflicting opinions and designs and pursuits, earnestly to inquire, and resolutely to seek for the ends and objects; the plans and methods to which the God of holiness would have us devote our strength and our resources. On the foundations of the universe and in his sacred word, He has clearly and impressively described "the old paths—the good way." And when we have discovered amidst the various relations we sustain what is *the will of God*, we are to make that will the very basis of all our designs, and methods, and exertions.

"According to the Scriptures," then we are required,

1. By earnest inquiry and thorough examination, to seek the "good way;"
2. When found, to walk therein; and
3. To expect in so doing "rest for our souls."

This was precisely the course pursued by the "students, and especially the students in divinity" in one of the "theological seminaries" "among us." They "stood in the ways" and on a most important subject where many of the wise and the good were benighted and embarrassed "*asked*"—with great sincerity and earnestness and pathos "*asked*"—for the old paths"—paths opened and defined in eternity by the unerring Hand;—and when the "*good way*" shone brightly before them, they ventured without hesitation or delay "to walk therein." With a strong unyielding hand, they pushed their inquiries right on in a straight line to just and sound conclusions; and these conclusions they proclaimed both with their lips and in their lives. "For these causes," they were now reproached as sturdy rebels, though they had broken no law, violated no just authority; now they were ridiculed as noisy "boys," though they wielded the powers of mature age; and finally, they were pitied as the victims

of "monomania"; though none "of their adversaries were able to resist the wisdom and the spirit, by which they spake."

In another case, which has attracted no little attention, inquiry and discussion on a most important practical concern, to ascertain the "good way," was introduced and encouraged by *the faculty* of a collegial and theological institution. But the enemies of free discussion and thorough reformation were greatly displeased. They were as captious, illnated, unprincipled and violent in their opposition, as the bad cause, in which they were engaged, could well make them. Falsehoods, equally gross, silly, and malignant, invented to injure that faculty, were not only put into circulation; but published as on "the best authority" in the\* official journal of a professedly benevolent society, which by a late doctor of divinity on a great occasion was shown, *in his way*, to be "twin-sister of the American Bible Society." How difficult it is to suit evil doers in the methods, which may be employed to expose their ill-designs?

The General Assembly of the church, to which Mr. W. is understood to belong, ought not to be slow to take the hint, which clearly belongs to them, when he throws out the suggestion for the benefit doubtless of "all whom it may concern" that the bad spirit, he describes, "has crossed the track of many of our benevolent enterprises, disturbing their counsels, dividing their friends, and putting a stop to the good, they were doing." Many of the doctors, who are so bitterly opposed to the *great voluntary associations* of the church, we doubt not are Mr. Woods' constant and admiring readers. We hope, they will take in good part and turn to good account the admonition, to which they are so justly entitled, and which they so greatly need. A word to the wise is sufficient.

But others have been charged with "crossing the track and disturbing the counsels of" some of "our benevolent enterprises." The friends of the colored American, in their

\* See the African Repository, for Oct. 1833, p. 245, 6. The statement, there published, Prof. Green over his own name pronounced *false*; and called on Mr. Gurley, the editor of the African Repository, to describe the authority, on which it was made. This Mr. G. has hitherto neglected to do. After *some eighteen months*, the secretary of the trustees of the Western Reserve College admitted, that the statement, complained of, *was false*. Will Mr. Gurley now let the public know, on whose authority such a silly lie was told in the Repository?

united exertions to raise him among his fellow-citizens to his proper level, have ventured respectfully and earnestly to request the American Bible Society to see to it, that the holy volume, according to the solemn resolutions of that institution, be offered to every family in the republic. This request, though it brought those, who urged it, to the attitude of entreaty, seems to have been regarded by not a few, as involving an attack upon the Bible Society! We have reason to know, that the abolitionists have been solemnly warned against repeating such a request, on the ground that they would excite against the good cause, in which they were enlisted, a great deal of prejudice and opposition! However you may explain yourselves, we have been assured, you will be represented and regarded, as waging war upon that sublime institution, which has the reverence and the confidence of the whole nation. And so, to intreat the Bible Society to place the sacred volume within the reach of the injured, the degraded, and the wretched, is to wage war upon it! That is, we wage war upon the Bible Society in presenting to its compassionate regard those very objects, which are embraced in its appropriate design! The institution is so sacred, so venerable, so deeply rooted in the hearts of all the churches of our land, that we may not lead up our poor, persecuted black brother, and humbly ask that a crumb of mercy may be given him! The oppressor is a patron of the Bible Society; and he will be offended if the victims of his rapacity are pitied!—But the law forbids the slave to read the Bible! Horrible, most horrible! Could a law framed in Hell more directly and flagrantly oppose the designs of Heaven! And is the church to witness the damning influence of such laws without pity, disgust, and indignation! But how are these emotions, with correspondent action, to be produced? Treading in the foot-prints of the “priest and Levite,” are we to turn away from our brother, leaving him “half dead” in the hands of the thieves, who have stripped him, and wounded him, and now stand over his bleeding body, to deprive him of any kind offices, which humanity might offer? No, let the Bible be offered, again and again, to all, who *ought* to read its pages. If they are forbidden, or unable to do so, let the petty tyrants, who keep them in ignorance and chains, be constrained, again and again, before the eyes of the nation, to belch out

their blasphemies, and swing their cart-whips! Abused and resisted mercy will at length rouse up, and plead with energy and effect the cause of the oppressed.

After all, what are the *elements* of this institution, which we must approach with so much lowliness and reverence? We own we have been amused with the mutual relation of things, which a little attention to this inquiry forced upon our notice. The same men, who were warned to beware of pressing their petitions upon the Bible Society, lest they should profanely approach, and rudely touch a thing too sacred for "unbidden hands to meddle with," find that **THEY THEMSELVES**, as truly as any of the children of Adam, *are members of this institution*. They help compose what is too hallowed and venerable for them to address, even in the language of supplication! *As members of one society, they must uncover their heads, and reverently bow, with their fingers on their lips, to THEMSELVES, as members of another society!*

Mr. Woods, in his vague and misty way, gravely tells us, that in this country, "*the State—THE Church*, are laid open with unsuspecting frankness, to the view and touch of the *whole nation*." True enough. But **BY WHOM?** To whose condescension is the nation indebted for this wonderful privilege? Why, to *their own*? The task, which in this country every man has the responsibility of performing, is most graciously placed beneath his eye, and within his reach! The nation is magnanimously pleased to permit the nation to see what the nation is a-doing! And so the people, unsuspectingly allowing the people to see what the people are about, may, taking advantage of the liberty which the people have granted to the people, go on to modify, and reform, and radically amend the doings of the people! We would humbly suggest to Mr. Woods, whenever he may take up his pen again to write down the radicals, to dedicate his paragraphs to the ghost of prince Metternich.

We will endeavor, however, to remember, for high and holy purposes, what Mr. Woods reminds us of, that "every institution among us moves pliantly, hither and thither, with every blast of the popular will." We know that well enough. The foulest customs, the worst usages, the bloodiest laws in the republic, might, with a single blast of the popular will, be scattered to the winds. Such a blast we will not cease

earnestly to invoke. Let it come. It may under God save the nation from a premature and dishonored grave. While we have tongue or pen, God forbid that we should cease to importune our fellow-citizens to "will" the utter destruction of every moral evil, which has insinuated itself into any of our institutions, political or ecclesiastical!

As to the "levelling and disorganizing spirit" of which Mr. Woods complains, we ask, *whom does it possess?* Whom has this demon entered? Clearly the ruffians who have employed the mob to worry and devour the fast, unflinching friends of human nature. We can never forget by whose influence, and under what pretences, thousands of poor thoughtless creatures were goaded on to those shameless excesses and enormities, which have recently disgraced some of our principal towns and cities. We can never forget under whose banner they fought. The wretches who set them on, alike unprincipled and insolent, supporting, and wielding an abused press, arrogated to themselves the prerogative of dictating to their fellow-citizens what they might think and speak. To refuse to bow to their dictation was a crime, to be punished by the rabble at their heels. If Mr. Woods had these creatures, with their broadcloth and their ruffles,—their sleek faces, and fat hearts, in his eye, as possessed of a "levelling and disorganizing spirit," he has, indeed, hit his mark. These are *radicals* in the worst sense of the word; the foul enemies of good order, who would turn law and justice out of doors. Professed disciples of the meek and lowly Saviour, though some of them are known to be, what honest man must not exclaim, from the bottom of a loathing and indignant heart,—“O my soul, come not thou into their secret; to their assembly, my honor, be not thou united. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel.”

But if Mr. W. designed to throw his censures upon his fellow-citizens, who, in spite of the cord of caste, insist on treating every man according to his moral worth, he may rest assured, that they will regard his censures as devoid of point or force.\* To such a standard, Mr. W. and all his readers, however tenacious they may now be of those factitious distinctions which seem to give them a momentary

\* "Telum imbellis sine ictu."



consequence, must soon bow, or flee beyond the limits of *His* holy government, who sternly denies that He is "a respecter of persons." Such a standard, we are well aware, will "level" every high thing which exalteth itself against God, and "disorganize" every band of wickedness. Those who dread such results, doubtless have *their reasons* for their objections. *Real worth must always scorn factitious distinctions.* It does not claim respect for its features and complexion; for its coat and boots; for its coach and horses. It distinguishes between a *man* and his *color*; a man and his *clothes*. When, therefore, some bloated creature requires us to clear the way before his white face and powdered locks, alledging, in set phrase and big words, that those who have been darkened by the sun, or pinched by poverty, owe him reverence and homage,—we cannot be to blame for guessing, that he has nothing better to boast of than his complexion and his clothes.

We must not ourselves forget—we must not fail to remind our readers, that Mr. W. has condensed we know not what amount of thought in the grave and imposing form of a "MAXIM." By this, he is careful to inform us, *his* "reformer is always governed in his efforts;" and "in the observance of this, he is most widely distinguished from the whole tribe of radical innovators and revolutionists." Our readers cannot but desire to enrich themselves at this mine of massive, precious ore, which Mr. W. has generously laid open to the public eye. "*The maxim is this,—to begin his efforts, and to employ them chiefly, in correcting the dispositions in which the particular evil to be removed has originated, rather than in a direct attack upon the evil itself.*" The occasion which led Mr. W. to the sublime discovery of this maxim, seems to have been somewhat like the following:—He observed that the particular evil of rum selling had its "origin in the depraved dispositions of the human heart." This evil was "assailed," directly and powerfully "assailed." "An explosion of human passion" was thus "provoked." The heart of the rum-seller was reached and wounded. He took fire. He raved, and raged, and "imagined" a thousand dreadful "things." Now, what could be more natural—what more philosophical than the conclusion, that every other particular evil, springing from the same origin, would, if assailed, enlist in its defence the

same tumultuous passions? Any effort to bruise the head of a single viper that nestled in it, would make the human heart swell with rage. And that was a result greatly to be dreaded. For human passions, thus aroused, must gather strength by the fearful exercise to which they had been provoked. "The angry elements of the human breast," thus awakened, might, "in their cruel and unsparing sweep" bear away whatever should venture to oppose. Alas, had "the noble army of martyrs" had their "judgment" corrected by Mr. Woods' weighty maxim, how many of them "might have been saved to the cause of truth and virtue"! For look ye, you must not attack any particular evil for fear of reaching and provoking the heart, from whence it proceeded. If you touch the heart, you provoke an explosion, which may blow you to atoms. You must, therefore, silently and cautiously and very gradually creep along some covert bye-path, at a great distance from any of those evils which the heart is pledged to protect, and just remove (observe, without touching the heart, as that would provoke the dreaded explosion)—"those depraved DISPOSITIONS OF THE HUMAN HEART," which are the root and "origin" of the evils, you deplore. Thus according to our maxim-maker, if you touch a leaf or branch of any of its flourishing and fruitful evils, the heart will burn with rage; but if you remove the roots, that same heart will regard the process with meek and silent acquiescence. Here is a discovery "worth" proclaiming on the very house-tops!

But how are we to know, irrespective of the particular evils, in which they are embodied and presented, what are the "depraved dispositions of the heart." How but through "the fruit" it bears, can we ascertain the character of the "tree." Till expressed in the form of some "particular evil," any "depraved disposition," by which the heart may be infested, must be concealed from human observation. *Only through such evils, then, can we acquaint ourselves with such dispositions.* And how are we to produce in the bosom of any transgressor the salutary but painful conviction, that he has an evil heart? What methods shall we take? What arguments shall we urge? What illustrations employ? Can we do better than to direct his attention to the "particular evils" which mark his history? Through these, and these alone, can we hope to open his eyes upon

the "depraved dispositions of his heart." The evils then must be attacked and exposed, or the dispositions in which they originated can never be reached, much less corrected.

Nothing can be plainer or more certain, than that the reformers, whose doctrines, methods and movements are described in the bible, acted on no such maxim as Mr. Woods proposes. They knew of no covert and concealed path, by which they might reach the heart and correct its depraved dispositions without a direct attack upon the particular evils, which sprung from thence. A single glance at the pages of Isaiah or Jeremiah or Hosea may be enough to convince any candid reader, that the prophets found their way to the human heart through the evils, to which it had given birth. What would our prudent maxim-maker and his admirers say of the official course of John the Baptist. Did that intrepid reformer cautiously avoid a "direct attack" upon the particular evils," which prevailed around him? For a time Herod himself seems to have been awed and delighted with the pointed, bold, and impressive eloquence of the Baptist. But he was not reformed. Habitually he indulged in guilty pleasures. *He retired from the feet of the holy prophet to the bed of his adulteress!* At length the "particular evil," of which he was guilty arrested the attention of the reformer, and the next thing we hear is the bold reproof, which fell upon the heart of Herod with the scorching, torturing effect of living coals; "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife"! Dares Mr. Woods, dare the men, with whom he sympathizes on the subject of reform, apply to John, as they see him led to prison and to death for his fidelity, those exclamations, in which they affect to lament the fate of zeal without discretion?

How, moreover, did our Saviour treat the "particular evils," which disgraced the age, which witnessed His crucifixion? Will our maxim-maker refer to the following pointed rebukes, which the Son of God urged upon the consciences and hearts of sinners, with whom He had to do, as illustrations of his own doctrines on the subject of reform? "Woe unto you, scribes, pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you scribes, pharisees, hypocrites! *for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers:*

*therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.* Woe unto you, scribes, pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land *to make one proselyte*, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall *swear by the temple*, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor. Ye fools and blind, for whether is greater the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? And whosoever shall swear by the altar it is nothing, but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is on it, he is guilty. Ye fools and blind, for whether is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifieth the gift. Whosoever therefore, shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it and by all things thereon. And whosoever shall swear by the temple sweareth by it and by Him that dwelleth in it. And he that shall swear by heaven sweareth by the throne of God, and by Him that sitteth thereon. Woe unto you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint, anise and cummin, and *have omitted the weightier matters of the law*, JUDGMENT, MERCY AND FAITH; these ought ye to have done and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes, and pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make *clean the outside of the cup and of the platter*, but within they are full of *extortion and excess*. Thou blind pharisee! cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye, also, *outwardly* appear righteous unto men, but within ye are *full of hypocrisy and iniquity*. Woe unto you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. *Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers! how can ye escape the damnation of hell.*"

Had our Saviour adopted Mr. Woods' maxim and prac-

ticed the prudence, which he and his friends are so much distinguished for, instead of "rushing within the cruel and unsparing sweep of the angry elements, which" his fidelity had "awakened" in the bosoms of the wicked, he would have eagerly welcomed and anxiously retained the regal honors, which on one occasion were placed within His reach. Instead of dying the death of a slave He would have lived the life of a King. Will Mr. Woods venture to apply to Him the heartless exclamation; "How many, alas! have fallen victims to this mistaken method of reform, whom a better judgment might have saved to the cause of truth and virtue"?

To those, who are disposed to admire and adopt the maxim, to which we have so often adverted, we would venture, moreover, to commend the style of instruction, which in imitation of the example of his Lord, and in accordance with the methods of his fellow-apostles, James adopted. He opened his eye upon that "particular evil"—the source of multiplied hurtful influences;—"respect of persons," which it seems had even in his day crept into the church, to waste its strength and mar its beauty. Upon this evil, he made a direct attack. Will Mr. Woods say for the want of a "better judgment"? "For if there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring and in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect unto him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place, and say unto the poor, Stand thou there, or, sit here under my footstool; are ye not then partial in yourselves, and have become judges of evil thoughts? But ye have despised the poor." With what wry faces would the bare reading of this homely passage fill those *christian* assemblies, which would be most forward politely to bow assent to the *wise* maxim of our *reformer-maker*!

Where was any moral evil ever removed from the face of the earth by any such methods as Mr. W. commends? Were these Luther's methods? Were they Calvin's? Were they the methods of John Knox? By such methods\* did

\* "Still, however, there are truths so self-evident, or so immediately and palpably deduced from those that are, or are acknowledged for such, that they are at once intelligible to all men, who possess the common advantages of the social state; although by sophistry, by evil habits, by the neglect, false persuasions, and

Clarkson and his coadjutors abolish the slave trade in England ; or their successors in the promotion of human happiness, slave-holding from the West Indies? To what else have the evils of intemperance ever yielded in this republic than to direct attacks ! Only by *direct onset* has any thing been gained in this holy cause.

But perhaps Mr. Woods has some appropriate and impressive illustrations of the soundness, right and worth of his maxim, in the methods which religious teachers at the South have employed to free the republic and the church from the "particular"—yes, *very* "PARTICULAR evil" of *slavery*. Age after age have they gone on employing, it would seem—we know not what *indirect* means—to correct those "depraved dispositions" in which this evil had its origin. A "*direct attack*" upon it, "*their better judgments*" have prevented them from making. They doubtless felt that the cause of "truth and viture" could not spare such advocates ; they have therefore been careful enough not "to awake the angry elements of the human breast, and then rush within their cruel and unsparing sweep." They felt, according to Mr. Woods' doctrine, that to become *martyrs in that cause, was to be lost to it?* But what good have all their efforts to correct the depraved dispositions of men-stealers around them done? Good ! The evil which proceeded from these depraved dispositions, has every year been gathering strength. It has gone on unchecked, poisoning the life-blood, and palsying the powers of the church. Nay, these very teachers have, in great numbers, themselves become the active, hearty participants in the very crime which they were bound to expose and condemn ! So much for the success of discreet exertions to remove a particular

*impostures of AN ANTI-CHRISTIAN PRIESTHOOD, JOINED IN ONE CONSPIRACY WITH THE VIOLENCE OF TYRANNICAL GOVERNORS, the understandings of men may become so darkened, and their conscience so lethargic, that there may arise a necessity for the republication of these truths, and this too with a voice of LOUD ALARM AND IMPASSIONED WARNING. Such were the doctrines proclaimed by the first Christians to the Pagan world—such were the lightnings flashed by Wickliffe, Huss, Luther, Calvin, Zuinglius, Latimer, &c., across the papal darkness ; and such in our own times—the agitating truths, with which Thomas Clarkson and his excellent confederates—the Quakers—fought and conquered the LEGALIZED BANDITTI OF MEN-STEALERS, the numerous and powerful perpetrators of rapine, murder, and (OF BLACKER GUILT THAN EITHER) SLAVERY."* COLERIDGE'S Friend, p. 49, 50. We recommend this paragraph to the attention of the warm admirers of the great English philosopher and poet—especially in Vermont. The gentlemen Tracy can doubtless digest it.

evil, by correcting the dispositions in which it had its origin, without a direct attack upon the evil itself. "*The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.*"

There *was* a man, who for a time, ventured to act uprightly, and with decision and effect even at the infected South, on the subject of slave-holding. A few sentences from Southey's life of Wesley will introduce him to our readers. "Wesley," Mr. S. informs us, "had borne an early testimony against the system of negro slavery. Dr. COKE feeling like Mr. Wesley, took up the subject with his usual ardor, preached upon it with great vehemence, and prepared a petition to Congress for the emancipation of the negroes. With this petition he\* and ASBURY went to General Washington at Mount Vernon, and solicited him to sign it. Washington received them courteously and hospitably; he declined signing the petition, that being inconsistent with the rank he held; but he assured them THAT HE AGREED WITH THEM, and that if the assembly should take the petition into consideration, he would signify his sentiments by a letter. They proceeded so far themselves, that they required the members of the society to set their slaves free; and several persons were found who made this sacrifice from a sense of duty. One planter in Virginia emancipated twenty-two, who were, at that time, worth from thirty to forty pounds each. His name was *Kennon*, and deserves to be honorably recorded; but such instances were rare. And Dr. Coke, who had much of the national ardor in his character, proceeded in such an intolerant spirit of philanthropy, that he soon provoked a violent opposition, and incurred no small degree of personal danger. One of his sermons upon this topic incensed some of his hearers so much that they withdrew, for the purpose of waylaying him; and a LADY *negro-owner* promised them fifty pounds if they would give "*that little doctor*" AN HUNDRED LASHES. But the better part of the congregation protected him, and THAT

\* Were not Coke and Asbury "FOREIGNERS"? Did they not venture to find fault with what the South now declares, not even Northern Americans shall meddle with? And this soon after the "revolutionary" war? when the wounds inflicted in that contest were yet scarcely healed? Why did not *George Washington* rebuke them for their interference in what was none of their business? Let our windy tongue-valiant patriots, who are so forward with childish petulance, to denounce and insult George Thompson and Charles Stuart answer these inquiries.

**SAME SERMON PRODUCED THE EMANCIPATION OF TWENTY-FOUR SLAVES.** In one county the slave-owners presented a bill against him, which was found by the grand jury, and no less than *ninety* persons set out in pursuit of him, but he was got beyond their reach. A more ferocious enemy followed him with an intention of shooting him; this the man himself confessed, when sometime afterwards he became a member of the Methodist society. On his second visit to America, Coke was convinced that he acted indiscreetly, and *he consented to let the question of emancipation rest, rather than stir up an opposition which so GREATLY IMPEDED THE PROGRESS OF METHODISM.*" Vol. II. 203, 204.

On this interesting and instructive quotation, we cannot help remarking,

1. That those great lights of the Methodist society, *Wesley, Coke and Asbury*, were unanimous in their abhorrence of and opposition to the system of slave-holding. Wesley was a thunderbolt upon man-stealers.

2. *Washington "agreed with" these men* in their views of this subject, and encouraged them in their exertion, to promote the abolition of slavery.

3. The truth of God, plainly and pointedly announced by Dr. Coke, found its way, with scorching influence, to the consciences and hearts of the petty tyrants, by whom he was surrounded. Some were enraged; others, set their bondmen free.

4. Coke was at length persuaded to abandon the ground of truth and rectitude, in his official efforts; *not by the violence of open infidels, but by the opposition of "false brethren."* The question of emancipation was put to rest lest the progress of Methodism should be impeded. *Thus Methodism lent its influence to rivet the fetter upon the heel of the slave!* It is our conviction that the American church is chiefly responsible for the atrocities and horrors of American slavery!

The trials Dr. Coke had to encounter in the stupid selfishness of his brethren, an extract or two from his journal, as quoted from Mr. Southey, will set in a clear and striking light. "At night I lodged in the house of Capt. Dillard, a most hospitable man, and as kind to his negroes as if they were white servants. It was quite pleasing to see them so decently and comfortably clothed. And yet I could not beat



into the head (heart!) of that poor man, the evil of keeping them in slavery, although he had read Mr. Wesley's Thoughts on Slavery (I think he said) three times over. But his good wife is strongly on our side." "I preached the late Col. Bedford's funeral sermon, but I said nothing good of him, for he was a violent friend of slavery; *and his interest being great with the Methodists in these parts, he would have been a dreadful thorn in our sides, if THE LORD HAD NOT IN MERCY TAKEN HIM AWAY.*"

What if instead of abandoning the high ground, which in his integrity and benevolence he had taken, Dr. Coke had heartily and strenuously maintained it. What if the lady negro-owner and her numerous friends had seized him and sucked his blood. The progress of a spurious Methodism might have been impeded. But would his life, thus taken, have been lost to the cause of human rights? Of that cause, scores of earnest and determined advocates would have sprung up from his sacred ashes. And the more widely these ashes had been scattered on the winds, the more rich and glorious would have been the future harvest of martyrs.

Before we bring this article to a close, we would illustrate in a few particulars the practical bearings of the doctrines, which under the advocacy of such men as Mr. Woods, seem to have obtained a wide prevalence in the American churches. Let our readers understand, then, that in the *poetry of philanthropy*, they may "aim at that blissful state, in which nothing shall hurt or molest;" but in their "practical" concerns they are "patiently to endure" "a large class of evils and disorders," which, while endured, cannot but prevent the introduction of that state. In the *poetry of philanthropy*, they are to regard the "business of doing good" as "taking for the most part the shape of reform;" *in their practical concerns*, they are never to forget that "after sacrilege, there is nothing more profane than with rash and unbidden hands" to engage in the work of reformation. In the *poetry of philanthropy*, they are not to regard the work of reform, "as to be done at once, in rare emergencies, and then intermitted." "It needs," they must not forget, "to be as INCESSANT as are the insidious encroachments of corruption;" *in their practical concerns*, they will find it the labor of a long life to determine whether they ought to lift a finger to remove any of the evils, by which

humanity may be oppressed. In the *poetry of philanthropy*, they may venture to declare, *in general*, that "the evils which man has suffered, and continues to suffer, from the abuse of the civil and ecclesiastical powers, ordained for his benefit, are immeasurably greater than those which have befallen him from any other source; and the call for their correction is, therefore, proportionably loud"; in *their practical concerns*, instead of a direct attack upon these evils, they are chiefly to busy themselves with correcting the *dispositions* from which they originated. In the *poetry of philanthropy*, they are to throw out the hint "to the enemies of seasonable and needful changes," "that the horrors of revolution are more to be charged upon them, than upon the immediate agents and victims"; in *their practical concerns*, they are to be extremely cautious how they wake the angry elements of the human breast, and expose themselves to their cruel and unsparing sweep.

But we have proceeded far enough. Our hearts sicken within us. *Pliable* himself would have been a fair candidate for distinguished honors in the religious world, where such doctrines as abound in the article under review, prevail. *These doctrines contain the seeds of foul apostacy from the christian cause.* Their prevalence is the decline of every thing true, and good, and sacred in the church. Our warning voice, however feeble it may be, we cannot but raise. In the ears of every disciple of Jesus Christ, we cry, Beware! Admit the doctrines, which to a fearful extent prevail in the religious world—such doctrines as we have endeavored to expose in the paragraphs, to which we have now invited your attention—and your life-blood is poisoned at the fountain. You will be prepared to be any thing and to do any thing, which a selfish, thoughtless world may demand. To peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Spirit, and the smiles of Jesus Christ you must bid adieu! If you cherish the temper of Demas and of Judas, you ought to expect the retribution which gave them their place among hypocrites and unbelievers.

From those who can read such articles as that, on which in this paper we have been dwelling, without disgust and indignation, the friends of human rights ought to know, that they have nothing of sympathy or assistance to expect. They might as well repair to a "broken cistern" for living

water. In standing up erect on the rock, which eternal recititude has furnished, they have committed in the eyes of the slave of expediency an unpardonable sin. He can forgive the wretches who fasten an iron grasp on the throats of their helpless, unoffending brethren; nay, he can offer ingenious apologies, and a stout vindication of their crimes. But the deep sympathy with the suffering and the dumb, which the friends of human rights may betray; their earnest and determined efforts in the spirit of the gospel, and in accordance with their obligations as good citizens of the republic, to break every yoke, and set the oppressed free, he can never forgive. He can with a hearty good will misunderstand their motives, misinterpret their language, misrepresent their movements. And when he sees them subject to insult and outrage, to scorn and violence, he can look coolly on, with what he pleases to call a "manly composure." And if they were dragged to the stake, the most they could expect of him would be the expression of a regret which they did not feel, that they had imprudently thrown themselves away!

Let not those who plead the cause of the persecuted negro be deceived. Fiery trials let them calmly expect. If the burdens of their crushed brethren, whom they dare to recognize *as men*, are thrown upon their shoulders, let them not be surprized or shocked. He, who hates the negro, will never love his advocates. He who can sympathize with men-stealers, will never love their reprovers. He will consent to see them scourged with the lash, which is red with negro-blood. We may as well throw ourselves on the mercy of the negro-stealer of the South as the negro-hater of the North. What good can we expect from either? Be it ours to cut loose from all merely human dependencies. "Cursed is the man who trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." Be it ours to confide in God. He is the patron of righteousness—the avenger of the oppressed. "Blessed is he, THAT CONSIDERETH THE POOR; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: AND THOU WILT NOT DELIVER HIM UNTO THE WILL OF HIS ENEMIES."