

tuating it? Why do we make no serious efforts to terminate it? Is it not because our perception of its sinfulness is very feeble and indistinct, while our perception of the difficulties of instructing and emancipating our slaves is strong and clear? As long as we believe that slavery, as it exists among us, is a *light evil* in the sight of God, so long will we feel inclined to pronounce every plan that can be devised for its termination, inexpedient or impracticable. Before, then, we unfold our plan, we wish to examine the system, and try it by the principles which religion teaches. If it shall not be thus proved to be an abomination in the sight of a just and holy God, we shall not solicit your concurrence in any plan for its abolition. But if, when fairly examined, it shall be seen to be a thing which God abhors, we may surely expect that no trifling amount of trouble or loss will deter you from lending your efforts to its extermination.

Slavery is not the same all the world over; and to ascertain its character in any particular state or country, we must examine the constituents and effects of *the kind of slavery which there exists*. The system as it exists among us, and is constituted by our laws, *consists of three distinct parts—a deprivation of the right of property, a deprivation of personal liberty, and a deprivation of personal security*. In all its parts it is, manifestly, a violation of the laws of God, as revealed by the light of nature, as well as the light of revelation.

1st. *A part of our system of slavery consists in depriving human beings of the right to acquire and hold property*. Does it need any proof to show that God has given to all human beings a right to the proceeds of their own labor? The heathen acknowledge it—every man feels it. The Bible is full of denunciations against those who withhold from others the fruits of their exertions. “Wo unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbor’s service without wages, and giveth him not for his work.”* Does an act which is wrong, when done once and toward one individual, become right because it is practised daily and hourly, and towards thousands? Does the just and holy One frown

* Jeremiah, xxii, 13. See also James, v, 4; Lev. xix, 13; Deut. xxiv, 14, 15