

does ought to prevent another from enjoying or possessing his liberty is a wrong done. He has a right to possess his liberty; not the mere privilege of purchasing it; and consequently the master can have no just claim upon him for merely ceasing to do him a wrong. To infer otherwise would involve a palpable absurdity. It is altogether another question, how far the owner of a slave may possess a just claim upon his fellow citizens, who have, by their support of the system of slavery, or their neglect to exert the powers they possess for its overthrow, made themselves partners with him, in the wrong; and thereby perhaps been a means of leading him into it. Let this be decided as it may, it does not affect the right of the slave to his liberty; nor the duty of the master, and all others combined by law or otherwise in the support of slavery to cease their wrong doing. The right of the slave to enjoy liberty being admitted, the duty of those concerned to proceed to give it to him, with no other delay than that which is necessary to go through the required process, is necessarily assumed. To say that a slave has a right to his liberty, but that under the circumstances in which he is placed, it would be wrong to set him free; is only to utter an absurdity, a contradiction in terms. None are capable of believing such a proposition, for the belief of the one part destroys that of the other. There are however many who from want of attention to the true import of their language make use of analogous forms of expression. They probably mean that all men in some fancied original state, had a right to liberty, but that under the operation of law or other causes, that right has been in some cases destroyed, taken away, consigned to annihilation. Hence, we frequently hear it said that the slaves are *deprived of every right*, that of liberty among the rest; a form of expression which must have originated with the idea that human rights were the mere creatures of law, to be given and taken away at pleasure—privileges conferred by the supreme power in the state and nothing more. And although the idea is now entertained to some extent, "man is endowed by his Creator with certain unalienable rights," rights which cannot be made alien to him; the old forms of expression are still used, and that too by persons who are very far from believing what they say; thus showing that the idea that human rights are superior to human laws, has not yet pervaded the public mind, so as to control the habitual current of thought, and thus change the forms of expression which have grown to be common under the influence of other conceptions. I make these remarks not for the purpose of provoking a controversy with my friend, but for the benefit of all who may have associated a meaning with the phrase unconditional emancipation, which the words in their common natural acceptation do not imply and who herein find cause of accusation against Abolitionists, and excuses for their own doing-nothingness in relation to slavery.

Harmony Grove, Dec. 10, 1847. W. J.

#### For the Delaware Abolitionist.

My friend, W. J., asks, what condition I would annex to the enjoyment of liberty by the freed-man?

I would annex the condition that the slave should not be worsted by the act of emancipation, if he was old and infirm; worn out in the service of his master. I would stipulate that he should have plenty to eat, drink, and wear, the remaining portion of his life,—immediate and unconditional emancipation would, in some cases, deprive him of this. Slavery, bad as it is, is not the worst condition of human existence. There seems to be a kind of horror in the term "conditional emancipation" when the real evil belongs to "unconditional." Who ever heard of "emancipation" being carried out and acted upon, without some kind of

condition attached to it! The liberty for an old, blind, decrepit slave to work or starve, is not so desirable; and this must be the effect of blindly carrying out this unconditional principle.

Again, the interests of the master may be sacrificed. Slaves are a species of property acquired under the sanction of law, and I think it wrong to deprive a man of his property without compensation, if legally obtained, even under a wicked law. Conditional emancipation seems therefore to be the only just and equitable plan.

B. W.

Wilmington, Dec., 12th mo. 24th, 1847.

#### For the Delaware Abolitionist.

#### THE WAR.

One of the greatest puzzles of the present day, has been to discover the why and wherefore, of the Mexican war. Our wisest men have expended their wits on the subject, and demonstrated nothing, except the wildness of their conjectures, and the impenetrable nature of the mill-stone through which they were endeavoring to see.

Some say that it exists by the act of Mexico, others by that of President Polk; and so on. Like the potato rot, the only thing known certainly about it, is, that it *does* exist. Its objects are equally enveloped in mystery. Some suppose that our Government wants the whole of Mexico, others that we want none of it. It is also said, that Yankees enterprize having exhausted all the raw material which is to be found in our own limited territory, must needs step over the line, in order to find "ample room and verge enough," for whittling, &c.—However this may be, there are certainly some individuals among us, largely blessed with faith, hope, and charity, who seem ready to believe that this Polking of our armies over the border is intended to extend the area of freedom. But the majority, less credulous, see more slavery than any thing else, at the bottom of it. Tossed about on this restless sea of controversy, the public mind has looked with much interest the prospect that Henry Clay would deliver a speech on the subject; and high hopes were raised that we should at last know something more about it than the one bare and incomparable fact, that we were suffering under its influence. But those hopes were vain, he merely tells us, on this head, the people ought to know, and it is the duty of Congress to tell them, why, they should continue to shed their blood, and pour out their treasure in support of this war. W. W.

#### For the Delaware Abolitionist.

We often hear it asserted that many of the Slave States, Virginia in particular, would, ere this, have emancipated their Slaves, had it not been for the "reckless and extravagant measures pursued by Abolitionists."

That the errors of Abolitionists prevent emancipation from progressing as fast it would otherwise do, cannot be doubted; but have they not, upon the whole, advanced the cause of freedom? Have they, not, with all their faults, done a great work for the nation! They have awakened a spirit of enquiry; directed public attention to the subject of Slavery; from small beginnings in a humble way, advocated the cause of the oppressed against the oppressor, and although not always in the mildest spirit, nor with the most efficient means; they have always been honest, sincere and conscientious, until now the cause of liberty is making its way into the legislative halls of the nation—into the religious, moral and political institutions of our country—agitating and shaking the very foundations of our government. Is all this nothing! Is it nothing to awaken a nation that is slumbering over a volcano, when every hour is increasing the danger and lessening the means of escape! Abolitionists, as a

party, do not expect to do more than this; the public must apply the remedy.

As to the charges of Abolition retarding the cause of emancipation, a few facts will show that the South were no better prepared to hear the truth before the Anti-Slavery agitation in the North than they are now:

"More than forty years ago, Father Gilleland established a Sabbath School in North Carolina to teach the blacks to read the Word of God. It was disbanded by the slaveholders. About thirty years ago Mr. John Rankin commenced a similar school near Lexington, Ky., which was soon broken up by an armed band of slaveholders. Some eighteen years ago some of the members of the Strawberry Plains Church, East Tennessee, commenced instructing the colored people to read God's Word. In a few months it was broken up by slaveholders. About twenty years since, a Theological student by the name of Hill, made in East Tennessee a few anti-slavery addresses. The surrounding country became so excited that for some time he dared not go out of the institution for fear of his life. About eighteen years ago a young minister by the name of Eggleton, preached a sermon against slavery in East Tennessee. For this his Presbytery took away his license to preach and refused to return it again until he had pledged himself not to preach any more against slavery. All these facts occurred where slavery is found in its midst form. Many more might be given, but these are sufficient to show that the Southern mind was no better prepared to receive the truth before the anti-slavery agitation in the North than they are now. The fact is the South has not been so well prepared to receive the truth respecting Slavery for the last forty years as it is now. There are more decided Anti-Slavery men now at the South, and more is now doing to extend Anti-Slavery principles in the slave States, and these principles are better received, than at any other time, as might be proved by any number of facts."—*in American Observer*

#### DELAWARE ABOLITIONIST.

SATURDAY MORNING, JAN. 1, 1848.

James B. Brooke, Publishing Agent.

#### DELAWARE REFINEMENT.

"Four colored women were whipped at New Castle on Saturday week. They received 21 lashes each. A colored man, at the same time, received 63 lashes. He was whipped on three indictments, receiving 21 lashes for each.—One of the women is to be sold as a slave for 7 years, and another 23 years. One is lashed on the back and sold as a slave, for stealing twenty-five cents worth of tallow! It was proved that the tallow was found under her bed. The jury were out all night, and it is said actually burnt more tallow in finding the verdict than was stolen.

Samuel D. Burris, a colored man, who was convicted of enticing away a slave from Kent county, was sentenced to 10 months imprisonment, and to be sold out of the State. Will the Government pardon him? One of the Judges says the only testimony against him, was giving a woman *three fgs* to get her breakfast, and we think there are few who would not have done the same. He was convicted on testimony that would not have convinced a white man.—So says the Blue Hen's Chickens."

We clip the above paragraph from the West Chester Register & Examiner. It is not the first of the kind we have seen. Our neighbors very justly regard us as wanting in refinement while such things are enacted among us. We may add that they might as justly regard us as