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For the National Era.

A DIARY.

BY MARTHA RUSSELL.

[CONTINUED.]

Jan. 15th.—They have been spoken—those words which I so dreaded to hear; and, oh Heaven, what am I, that I should inflict such pain and suffering upon any human soul! Never did he seem so truly good and noble as when, putting aside all earthly considerations, he plead in trembling tones for my love, for life's best boon from my hands!

And yet, never did I feel it more impossible to grant his prayer. God knows I would have done so, if I could; I would have put away my long-cherished dreams as idle, had I found any response to his words. I even plead for him. I set before me all his goodness and nobleness, his growing sympathy with my tastes and pursuits, the wide influence for good which, he urged, I possessed over him. I thought of my mother—of the life of toil and isolation that lie before me; but there came no response, and I dare not trifle with eternal truth.

He plead for hope, and urged the love which is the meed of years of tenderness and devotion. It cannot be. I have been down into the innermost recesses of my heart, and I know, by the love that went out so spontaneously toward another, that there are abysses of tenderness—aye, passion—there, that H. has no power to move; and knowing this, I dare not trust to years.

So I let him look into my heart; God gave me strength to do it; and, with an incoherent blessing on me for my truth, he went out into the storm and darkness; but the wintry sleet, nor the north wind, nor the darkness, is not more cold and dreary than the heart he has left behind! Oh, they know not woman's heart who talk of the pride of conquest!

There is nothing on God's earth that teaches humility, like the consciousness of being deeply and truly beloved!

Jan. 18th.—They say H. has gone to New York, *en route* for Europe! Doctor G. was sitting with us when Emilia came in, having just heard the news up town. Suddenly, interrupting herself in her exclamations of surprise, aunt turned to me: "You said H. called here the evening we went to hear Holmes lecture. Did he say nothing of this, Elizabeth?"

"No, certainly not, aunt;" and joy, that I was thus able to speak the truth, gave me courage to boldly face Doctor G.'s searching look.

But I *was* glad that uncle came in that moment, and created a diversion in my favor. He never sees mystery in anything that cannot be solved by the interest table, and thought H. gone to Europe on business. "Stocks are rising, and he has some interest there, I believe," he said.

"Stocks, uncle!" said Emilia, impatiently. "When did Fred. H. ever trouble himself about stocks, I should like to know?"

"I'm really afraid it's an attack of brain fever," began aunt, despondingly. His father died of it, and he has been threatened with it more than once. Don't you think so, Doctor?" she asked, anxiously.

"Not at all, my dear madam. Not that a young fellow's brain—aye, and blood, too—does get into a strange sort of whirl once in a while, but from other causes than congestion." And again he scanned my face closely.

Aunt sighed, and uncle spent a whole twenty minutes, a long time for him, in trying to prove to her the impossibility of there being any hereditary taint in the blood of her family—a family related to him.

According to him, all his own relatives have died through some oversight which might have been seen and provided for, had they been endowed with his wisdom. I presume, he expects to be translated.

Jan. 20th.—Emilia takes H.'s absence to heart. What does it mean? Underneath that war of words which sometimes bordered on sarcasm between them, did there lurk a deeper feeling? I must look to this. She is in high spirits to-night, though, because Mr. E., who lectured before the "Institute" last night, is to dine here to-morrow. She prophecies I will fall in love with him at once. Perhaps so; I shall see.

Jan. 21st.—He has been here—the author, poet, prophet, whom I have reverenced for years. I have looked upon his face, listened to his voice, and it is much to say that he did not disappoint me. The face is good, grave, and serene; but his chief power lies in his voice and manner, which grows on one until it becomes a complete fascination.

At least, so I thought, when he turned from the mixed company after dinner, and began to talk to me of Browning's poems, which lay upon the table. Perhaps I was prepossessed by the interest with which he listened to my remarks, but every word seemed the echo of a loving heart, an earnest soul, and a subtile intellect; subtile and beautiful, rather than deep or strong—passionless and calm as a Greek statue. He is a wonderful man, and yet I could *feel* rather then *see* his limitations; and though he talked so eloquently of "Hakeem in the Return of the Druses," he could never be a "Hakeem" for me—scarcely a "Djabal." And yet, verily, there are moods when it seems an exceedingly pleasant sin to fall down and worship false gods!

Jan. 22d.—I don't know what is the matter here. Some demoniacal influence pervades our atmosphere, and everything goes wrong. Emilia is capricious as the wind; aunt is haunted by a legion of household evils, which, like John Barleycorn, "rise up again" as soon as I think I have laid them; and I get out of patience, and pray earnestly that I may never be a rich-poor woman.

I have seen Mrs. N. She is visiting at her uncle, Judge A——'s, and was at the concert to-night—a beautiful woman, of right queenly presence.

Jan. 23d.—A letter to day from our kind neighbor, Mrs. F. She says mother has changed very strangely within a week; thinks she has had a slight attack of paralysis, and advises me to come home. I have announced my determination to start to-morrow, but uncle and aunt talk of delay, of "next week," of the necessity of being "calm," and all that. They forget that my mother is all I have on earth.

I have agreed to stay until day after to-morrow, when uncle will go with me as far as New Haven, on his way to New York. Oh, mother! mother!

Jan. 24th.—I have been to bid good bye to the Lees. I fear I envied them, they were so happy. Mary is at school, thanks to the noiseless kindness of dear Mrs. G., and the mother and sister showed me her first problems in algebra with a mixture of pride and delight which was really amusing. The little boy did not seem to share in their reverence for those bits of paper, for he snatched at one of them, and tore it sadly, in his resentment at my considering them more worthy of attention than himself. And, after all, were there not in that little chubby being problems of far greater importance than any which mathematicians have solved—to which those of Newton and La Place are but trifles, save as they elucidate man's capability of approximation towards the Divine?

From the widow's I went to Doctor G——'s. The doctor was fortunately at home, looking over a ponderous "ledger" or "day-book," and humming his favorite song—"A man's a man for a' that."

"True," I cried, as I entered softly, and stole up behind him; "and save in the person of the writer of those words, never stood text and proof in such close relation, doctor."

"How now, you thief! What business have you to be stealing into a man's house after this fashion? But sit down there, while I go hunt up Lydia Mason; she's been looking for you these two days."

"You may save yourself that trouble, for, if I mistake not, I saw her go into your neighbor, Mrs. L——'s, as I turned the corner. So prepare yourself to play the agreeable."

"The Lord help us, then," he cried, with a ludicrous expression of resignation. "I had rather face a case of ship fever than a fashionable young lady!"

"And pray what entitles me to that distinction?"

"Look at yourself and answer. Who but a fool, which is but good Saxon for the whole class, would put velvet and furs enough about their shoulders to rig out the grand Lama, and leave their feet bare!" and he gave a glance of withering contempt at my beautiful, new gaiters.

"But these are cork soles, and"——

"The devil take the cork soles in such weather as this, fit only to buoy up witches! Where was your common sense and rubbers when you started?"

"One *minus* and the other *plus*," I said, laughing. "I did not think the pavement damp, and my rubbers are so large"——

"That they make your feet look larger. Well, you are pretty well off in that line," he went on grimacing; "but what in Heaven's name do you suppose a sensible man cares about how large a woman's foot is, provided it be not deformed, and she has brains enough in her skull to balance it!"

And so he scolded and joked till Mrs. G—— came, and we had a long talk of my future.

Why is it that I can speak to these people of things upon which my lips are sealed to those of my own blood? Blood! those alone are of our blood who understand us—who help us on the ways of life! God bless ye, true friends! The currents of life are driving us far apart, but my way cannot be wholly dark while I keep the memory of your love!

Passing through Pearl street, on my way home, I came suddenly upon my old playmate and schoolmate, James B——. He would have avoided me if he could, but I saw his intention, and defeated it. He took my outstretched hand, and answered my greeting without raising his eyes. Alas, then, the rumors of his "bad way" are true—the pale face, lustreless eyes, nerveless figure, and shambling step, were proof enough.

He seemed to wish to pass on, but I could not be put off. I spoke of old times—of Annie, his sister, long since among the angels—of his father—mother. Had he seen them of late? No; he had not been in D—— for more than a year. Indeed! Would he not promise to meet me there, week after next, say on Thursday? I intended paying his father and mother a visit as soon as I got home, and should need him there to bring up the "Roxbury russets," as of old. Wouldn't he promise?

He muttered something of engagements, but I urged my point until he promised.

Will he keep his word? I trust so. He has been the victim of evil influences, but He who gave back without Nain's gates that only son to his mother, is mighty still.

Jan. 26th.—Oh! it is sad, terrible, to come to one's home, and be welcomed—not by the firm, hard clasp, the dear, loving glances, the warm words of yore, but by trembling hands, a shaking head, and the thick, troubled speech, that indicates the presence of death in life! Mother! mother! How shall I bear this?

Now, I must find some words that will soften this hard-hearted creditor, Mr. J. Yesterday, when I met him, the memory of all his villany—the years when, as lessee of these few acres, he fleeced us gradually, the hypocrite! until, by one bold manœuvre he claimed all—rose up before me, and choked me. Oh! mother, would that I had been older then, or you wiser! But your wisdom was never of this earth! Now, I will go down on my knees to him, to keep a shelter above your head for the little time that is left you. He *must* be human—he cannot be more greedy than Death!

Shall I try uncle again? No! I can work! not beg. I told him all I could of this, as we came down yesterday; and got for an answer—"Mortgages are ugly things; best get rid of it. Your mother never had any business tact. Better let the place go; I advised it years ago."

Sell the place! It might have been done, and wisely, perhaps, some months ago. But, now, when you cling to it so childishly, mother—no!

Jan 30th.—"'Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.' You and yours helped me years ago, my child! and now it is my turn!" and, with these words, kind old Widow Dean has installed herself as my mother's nurse. Aye, and I "reap also where I never scattered;" for there are bread and ham, and cakes, and pies, sent in by kind and thoughtful hearts, and the miracle of the widow's cruse seems like to be repeated. God reward them!

Feb. 8th.—To-morrow is the day of my appointment with James B. I regret that I cannot keep it; but it cannot be. I will write and tell him why.

Feb. 10th.—I did go; for when, to please mother, I explained to whom I was writing and why, two days ago, she insisted on my going; and when I refused, fell a weeping, like a petulant child, and complained to Mrs. T., who happened to come in, that I was undutiful and ungrateful. Oh! mother, mother, not even death could fall heavier on my heart, than these poor, senseless words and tears!

Mrs F. advised me to go, saying that it was wisest to keep her quiet—that she would come in and help Mrs. Dean, if needed. "And you can take old Starface," added the kind neighbor; "he has not done anything in a week, for father's laid up with the rheumatiz, and the boys use the colt. He is a leetle stiff at first, like us old folks; but get him started, and he'll take you over there like a bird. You haven't forgot how to drive, I s'pose?"

I accepted the offer, and at sunset was sitting between old Farmer B. and his wife, talking of old things and new, life and death, and the things which lie beyond; for, as the old man's eyes have darkened, (he has been blind for more than a year, he tells me,) he has come to see more and more with the eye of the spirit, which discerneth all things. They said little of James, though I knew he was ever in their thoughts; and I did not tell them of his promise, fearing to raise hopes which might be disappointed. But they told me of their troubles—of the farm—how it was fast running down—buildings and fences going to decay for want of an efficient master; and thus the hours run on till the tall old clock struck nine. I still talked on, until another hour slipped away, and then, sad and disappointed, took the tall, glittering brass candlestick which had been waiting for me the last hour on the stand. There came a knock at the door; and begging the old lady to let me go, I hurried into the little entry, shutting the door behind me. It was, indeed, James.

When he saw me, his face lighted up, and, taking my hand, he said—

"So you did indeed trust me, Elizabeth!"

"Yes, indeed. Why not?"

"Why not!" in a tone of mingled bitterness and surprise; "do you not know what I am—a drunkard, a bankrupt, an outcast—a curse to myself and others?"

"The question is not what you are, but what you *can* be, James. You are a man, still, for you have kept your word with me."

"Perhaps so; but who will believe it?" he said, bitterly.

"I do!" There are those in the next room who believe it. Can you doubt *that?* And there is One above, James—He who seeth not as man seeth—He believes it. Oh! beware how you charge upon others the sin of your own unbelief!"

I was excited and nervous, and burst into tears, as I drew him into the next room. I know not well what followed; I heard only the mother's low weeping, and the blind father's broken voice, as he gave thanks for "this my son, which was lost, and is found!"

[TO BE CONCLUDED IN OUR NEXT.]

For the National Era.

THE SURF UPON THE SHORE.

BY MARY IRVING.

List the waves wild beating,
Echoing evermore;
Surge on surge retreating—
Raging on the shore!
Billows high and hoary,
Tell your tales to me!
Each hath earned a story
Far out at sea!
Ring out your tidings, as tirelessly you pour
Swelling surge on surging swell, oh surf upon the shore!

First Billow:

"Mournful is my message—
Hollow is my tone;
Wafting woeful presage
To a widowed one!"
Knell slow the burial bell—life and love are o'er,
Where sobbeth ceaselessly the surf upon the shore!

Second Billow:

"Hasten—hasten, sister!
Let my sparkling foam
Tell the hearts that missed her,
Helen cometh home!"
Ring clear the wedding bell! fear for her no more!
Glad is the greeting of the surf upon the shore!

Third Billow:

Sadder swells another—
"Would it were not mine!
Moaning to another,
From the 'gulphing brine!
All day, sick with hoping,
Silent watch she keeps;
Dank the weeds are drooping,
Where her sweet boy sleeps!"
Hushed be the heaving sea—yet one little hour,
Spare her the knelling of the surf upon the shore!

Fourth Billow:

"Oh! the gray old Ocean
Is not all a tomb!
Hush your hoarse commotion
O'er her caves of gloom!
I have borne a frail boy,
Lashéd on a spar,
Joyously, where 'sail, hoy!'
Mockéd the waves' war!"
Sister, sire, and mother, mourn for him no more!
Swiftly comes the wanderer, with the surf upon the shore!

Fifth Billow:

"Far and farther roaming,
In the Sun's young wake,
I have long been coming
Home to hearts that ache;
Hearts that laid their idol
Late on Duty's shrine—
Blessed her at her bridal—
Launched her on the brine!
Blest the white sail bearing
Mercy's messengers!
Wind and wave have caring
For sweet souls like hers!
Hundreds haste to greet her
On that heathen shore!
Friends, where next ye meet her,
Sea shall be no more!"
Sweetly and solemnly dieth the roar,
Swelling our hearts as the surf upon the shore!

For the National Era.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE MOSAIC LAWS OF SERVITUDE.

BY WM. JAY.

SLAVERY DEFINED.

It is obviously important that in all discussions involving emphatic words, having a direct bearing on the issue in question, the ideas intended to be represented by these words should be distinctly stated and clearly comprehended. In the following examination, the word *slave* will be frequently used, not incidentally nor figuratively, but as expressing a definite idea, and one necessarily connected with the very purpose of the investigation. Hence unless the idea represented by a *slave* and by *Slavery*, as his legal condition, be understood by the reader, the examination must prove to him vague, confused, and unsatisfactory. These words are often used in a figurative rhetorical sense, as a man is said to be the slave of sin, of passion, of his party, or of his business; and we often hear of political, military, and ecclesiastical Slavery. In such cases, a comparison more or less close is intended to be made with a species of servitude to which these words are legally and technically applied. As we shall use these words only in their strict *legal* sense, it is necessary that this sense should be unequivocally understood by the reader. For this purpose, it will be sufficient to cite two legal definitions of the word slave, taken from American statutes, viz:

"Slaves shall be deemed CHATTELS PERSONAL in the hands of their owners and possessors, and their executors, administrators, and assigns, to all intents, constructions, and purposes, whatever."—2 *Brevard's Digest*, 229, *S. Carolina.*

"A slave is one who is in the power of a master to whom he belongs. The master may sell him, dispose of his person, his industry, and his labor. He can do nothing, possess nothing, nor acquire anything, but what must belong to his master."—*Civil Code, art.* 35, *Louisiana.*

The leading and controlling idea in these definitions is the *chattelhood* of the slave: he is a *thing*, a vendible commodity—and at the death of the owner falling, like other chattels, into the hands of executors, &c., for the payment of debts and legacies.

The legal practical application of this idea incidentally appears in the following extract of a law of Maryland:

"In case the personal property of a ward shall consist of specific ARTICLES, such as slaves, working beasts, animals of any kind, stock, furniture, plate, books, &c., the court, if it shall deem it advantageous to the ward, may at any time pass an order for the sale thereof."—*Act of* 1798, ch. ci, *No.* 2.

Being a *thing*, the law classes him, as above, with beasts, furniture, and books; and when belonging to a minor he may, like a horse, be sold by the court for the pecuniary interest of the child, without the slightest regard to his own comfort, or his temporal or spiritual welfare. As slaves can acquire nothing but what belongs to their masters, the mother is the only parent recognised by law, and she is recognised for the sole purpose of vesting in her owner the property of her child, in the same manner and for the same reason that a calf or colt belongs to the possessor of the dam. Hence, as a necessary consequence, slaves have *legally* no conjugal and parental relations. Husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, have as such, in law, no rights and no duties, any more than the beasts of the field. Being "in the power of a master to whom he belongs," the slave has legally no religious rights. His master may at pleasure drive him to or from any place of worship, keep him in total ignorance of Christianity, or impart to him religious knowledge in any quantity and of any quality he may think proper. As the slave can possess nothing but what belongs to his master, that master may keep him in absolute penury all his days. Being in the power of the master, the slave may be beaten and tormented to almost any extent with perfect impunity. There are, indeed, laws against excessive cruelty to slaves and to animals. He who should flay either his horse or his slave alive would probably be punished; but neither the horse nor the slave can receive compensation for any barbarity he may suffer. Nor can the owner of either obtain redress for any injury done to his property that does not impair its value in the market. The most horrible outrage may be perpetrated on a slave, whether man or woman, with legal impunity, provided the slave is not thereby rendered less valuable as a chattel.

As the children belong to the owner of the mother, and are themselves chattels, Slavery is thus perpetuated from generation to generation; hence, Slavery is not merely chattelhood, but it is HEREDITARY CHATTELHOOD—a definition applicable to no other form of servitude.

INDEFINITE MEANING OF THE HEBREW TERMS OF SERVITUDE.

The first difficulty encountered in the present examination arises from the indefinite meaning of the Hebrew terms of servitude. The Hebrew was not a copious language, and to us it is rendered still more barren, from our possessing no other Hebrew writings than those contained in the Old Testament. We find, indeed, one term which seems free from ambiguity. *Sâkîr* expresses one who is hired to labor, and is properly rendered into English, hireling, and hired servant. But there is another, and in connection with our examination a very important term, which is used in the original in a very indefinite sense, and with which great liberties have been taken by English translators. The Hebrew verb, signifying "he labored," may or may not, according to the context, indicate that the labor done was performed for another. If done for another, then the Hebrew means, and is rightly translated, "he served." In the fourth commandment we are told, "Six days shalt thou *labor*." It is obvious that the version of this injunction, "Six days shalt thou *serve others*," would have been no less false than grotesque. The Hebrew verb of itself gives not the most distant hint whether the labor performed is voluntary or compulsory, with or without remuneration. From the form of the verb, "he labored or served," is derived the participle, "laboring or serving," and the substantive, "laborer or servant." The first is pronounced *abad*, the second *obed*, and the third *ebed*. The participle is often used substantively; as, in English, we say, a *serving* man or a *laboring* man. This participle is also used as a proper name; and, when so used, instead of being translated, is, in our English Bibles, transferred to the text, and in some editions the meaning is given in the margin; as, in Ruth iv, 17, we have *Obed* in the text, and in the margin, "that is, *servant*." Josephus also tells us that *obed* is the Hebrew for servant. Hence, in our subsequent remarks, we shall for convenience use *obed* for servant, without stopping to inquire whether in the particular text we are examining, the word is the substantive or the substantive participle. In Ecclesiastes v, 12, we have an example of the use of the participle: "The sleep of the *laboring* man is sweet." *Man* is here supplied by the translators. It would have sounded strange to be told that the sleep of a serving man, or of a bondman, is sweet. We see in this text, and in that quoted from the fourth commandment, that the *primary* signification of the verb and its cognates is *labor*. There is no word which, applied to man or woman, expresses the chattel principle; that is, there is *no Hebrew for slave.**

Obed is used to express the various relations of service, from the king on the throne to a domestic menial. It is even applied to the Messiah. Isa. xlii, 1. Rehoboam, the king, is called the *obed* of the people. 1 Kings, xii, 7. Jeroboam is said to have been Solomon's servant, and Joshua is called Moses's servant.

As already remarked, Obed is used as a proper name. On the birth of Ruth's son, "the women said unto Naomi, he shall be unto thee a nourisher of thine old age; and the women her neighbors called his name Obed." Ruth iv, 15, 17. Josephus tells us, "Naomi called him *Obed*, as being to be brought up in order to be subservient to her in her old age; for *obed*, in the Hebrew dialect, signifies a servant." Book V, chap. ix. We hear, moreover, of Obed the son Ephlal; I, chap. ii, 37. And of Obed the son of Shemai; I, chap. xxvi, 7. One of David's mighty men was Obed; I, chap. xi, 47. Another of the same is mentioned, II, chap. xxiii, 1. From the frequent use of this word as a proper name, and from its being given to the son and heir of the wealthy Boaz, it is evident that no idea of degradation was associated with it.

Obed has no feminine; but there are two words in Hebrew which are applied exclusively to female servants. If not synonymous, the difference in their signification is now unknown. They are applied to the *same* women, and also to women who are known to have been free. One of these words is rendered by our translators, at pleasure, maid servant, bondmaid, bondwoman, maid, and handmaid. It is applied to Hagar, to Bilhah, and by Ruth, Hannah, and Abigail the wife of Nabal, to themselves. The other word is also translated handmaid, bondmaid, maiden, woman servant, and maid servant. It is applied to Hagar, Bilhah, and Zilpah, and by Abigail to herself.†

From what has now been said, it is very certain that no evidence of the existence of Slavery among the Hebrews can be deduced from their terms of servitude.

It must be admitted, that if Slavery was legally established among the Hebrews, it is extraordinary that they should have had no word in their language designating a human chattel. It is not easy to understand how laws can be enacted respecting slaves, without naming them. Strange and startling would be the consequences arising from the substitution of the word *servants* for that of slaves in the American slave code. Very many of the slaveholders themselves, and multitudes of others, are in a legal sense servants, being employed in agencies of various kinds for a pecuniary compensation.

It is true that in that concentration of American hypocrisy and wickedness, "the Fugitive Act," no mention is made of *slaves*. Instead of slaves, (the persons intended,) we have "fugitives from labor," and persons "held to service or labor." Already have we had contradictory judicial decisions, as to the application of the execrable provisions of this act to absconding apprentices. There is nothing in the act itself to prevent a man who contracts to labor for another a certain time, and before the term is expired travels into another State, from becoming a victim to its barbarity. Neither the deceitful language of this act, nor its cruelty and injustice, find any precedent in the laws of God.

ARBITRARY AND PREJUDICED VERSION OF HEBREW TERMS OF SERVITUDE IN THE ENGLISH BIBLE.

We have stated that the first difficulty encountered in the present examination arises from the indefinite meaning of the Hebrew words applied to servitude. A second and perhaps more formidable difficulty, consists in the arbitrary and prejudiced version of those terms in our English Bibles. The popular idea of Hebrew servitude is of course derived from the version in common use. When in our Bibles terms are used descriptive of slaves, and which are never applied to freemen, superficial readers take it for granted that the *Hebrew words* thus rendered have the same signification.

To understand the bias of mind under which the translators labored, we must recollect that, as learned men, they were well acquainted with the Slavery of antiquity, and that, from the age in which they lived, they were accustomed to villenage, as it had lately prevailed in their own country, and indeed to a greater or less degree throughout Europe, and as it still prevailed to a great extent on the Continent. At the time of the Conquest, the most numerous class in the community were villeins, or slaves, the property of their lords, and incapable themselves of holding property.* This species of bondage, resembling in many respects American Slavery, had only totally expired in England till the reign preceding that in which the present version was made. It was gradually abolished, not by operation of law, but by the progress of civilization, which slowly converted the villein into a tenant. The consistency of Slavery with Christianity was not one of the questions which in that age engaged the attention of the Church, and excited theological controversy. The Fathers of the English Church seemed never to have searched the Scriptures, to know if they might lawfully hold property in man. The translators apparently took for granted that the Jews held slaves, and hence they *made* their translation accord with this supposition. It must also be recollected, that many of their Pro-Slavery versions were copied from the earlier English translations made in the reign of Henry VIII, when villenage was still common. To the liberty taken by the translators, of giving a Pro-Slavery sense to the Hebrew terms of servitude, must be attributed the popular impression, that the Jews were themselves slaves in Egypt. They were subjected to a tyrannical tax in labor for the *State*, but they were not slaves. Instead of being sold throughout the kingdom, and scattered among the Egyptian families, they lived together in the land of Goshen, in their own houses, were governed by their own officers, and, so far from being incapable of holding any property, each head of a family was required to kill for the Passover a lamb without blemish; and on leaving Egypt, they took with them their "flocks and herds, even very much cattle." They were, it is true, an oppressed people, but we cannot recognise in their condition a feature of chattel slavery. There is not the slightest reason for believing that, before the Exodus, any Hebrew but Joseph had ever been sold in Egypt. Yet our English Bibles lead us to look upon the Jews as slaves. Egypt is the "land of bondage," (of labor) and the "house of bondage" (of labor.) Their lives were made bitter with "hard bondage," (hard labor.) "Thou shalt remember thou wast a bondman (servant or laborer) in the land of Egypt."

The instances of arbitrary translations of *obed* are numberless. Let a few examples suffice: "Let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my Lord." The reader of course supposed there is the same distinction in the original as in the English, between servant—here a mere term of courtesy—and the bondman or slave which Judah offers to become. Yet *obed* alone is used: "Let thy obed abide instead of the lad, an obed to my lord." So Joseph's brethren imputed to him the design to take them "for bondmen," but the word used is the same with that applied by the Queen of Sheba to the officers of Solomon's Court: "Happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom." So also the terms in the original, signifying women servants, are at pleasure rendered handmaids, or bondmaids, while the mere English reader of course supposes that the same difference in meaning is found in the Hebrew.

The influence of the opinion held by the translators in regard to Hebrew Slavery on their version is obvious in various parts of the English Bible. In *Lev.* xxv, 39, we have—"If thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be *sold* unto thee." In the 47th verse of the *same* chapter, we have—"If a sojourner or a stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother that dwelleth by him wax poor, and *sell himself* unto the stranger or sojourner."

The inference from these two verses is, that a poor Jew might be sold by his creditor to one of his own people, but *not to a foreigner*; but that, if he chose, he might *contract* with a foreigner for his labor. Now, strange as it may seem, the Hebrew word rendered *be sold* in the first verse, is the identical word rendered *sell himself*, in the second. The Vulgate is more faithful. In the 39th verse it is—"Si paupertate compulsus, vendiderit *se* tibi frater tuus;" and in the 47th verse—"attenuatus frater tuus vendiderit *se* ei."

In both cases the man made a voluntary contract to serve six years. In *Jer.* xxxiv, 14, we have another instance of the desire of the translators to represent Jewish servitude as Slavery. The prophet is denouncing the wicked, coerced servitude of the poor Jews, and repeats the law of Moses—"Let ye go every man his brother an Hebrew which hath been sold unto thee, when he hath served thee six years." In the *margin* we have—"*or hath sold himself.*" Again, in *Jer.* ii, 14, we have—"Is Israel a servant? Is he a home-born *slave?*" Here the translators have honestly put the word slave in italics—thus admitting it to be *their* interpretation; but the interpretation betrays the theory which prompted it. The true translation is—"Is Israel a servant? Was he born in the house?" That is, is Israel not only a servant, but the son of a domestic? Our translators make Ezra say, "We were bondmen yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but has extended mercy unto us in the sight of the Kings of Persia."—*Ezra* ix, 9.

The appellation bondmen conveys an idea very inapplicable to the condition of the Jews in Babylon. They were subjects, tributaries, in a certain sense servants, but they were not chattels, nor the property of individuals. Some were high in office, some had great wealth, and Ezra tells us that the emigrants were accompanied, on their return to Judea, by their servants—of course, voluntary attendants. Jeremiah, writing to the captives in Babylon, to discourage all expectation of a speedy return, exhorts them—"Build ye houses, and dwell in them, and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them."—*Jer.* xxix, 5. Strange advice to be given to bondmen, or slaves. Once more: In *Rev.* xviii, 13, we read of merchandise in "*slaves* and souls of men"—in the original, "bodies and souls of men." The merchandise of Babylon in human bodies and souls may typify either ecclesiastical tyranny and controlling, or personal slavery. The interpolation of "*slaves*" into the text, is a *comment*, not a translation. The Vulgate, the Rheims, and it is believed all the Roman Catholic versions, have "*slaves* and souls of men," while in Tyndal's and Cranmer's versions, it is "*bodies* and souls of men." Strange is it, that King James's translators should have restored the Popish reading, evidently false as it is.

Divesting our minds of all preconceived opinions founded on certain words used in our *English* Bibles expressive of servitude, let us proceed to the examination of the laws of Moses, prescribing the relations of master and servant.

HIRED SERVANTS.

Both Jews and resident foreigners might be employed as hired servants: "Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land."—*Deut.* xxiv, 14. The law required the daily payment of wages: "The wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night, until the morning."—*Lev.* xix, 13. The reason of this prompt payment was, that the servant living at home, and not in the house of his employer, needed his wages for the immediate maintenance of himself and family. The exactness observed in paying the hireling, rendered "the days of an hireling" a proverbial simile of a precise definite time; and so also "the years of an hireling." "Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? Are not his days like the days of an hireling?"—*Job* vii, 1. "Within three years, as the years of an hireling, the glory of Moab shall be contemned."—*Isaiah* xvi, 14. That is, not a day beyond three years.

One great and important distinction between the hireling and other servants was, that he was not domesticated in the family of the employer, formed no portion of the household, took no part in the religious rites of the family, and was hence regarded as feeling no affection for his employer, and taking no interest in his affairs. It was expressly forbidden that a hired servant should share in the paschal feast provided by his employer. That was a *family* feast; and the hired servant, not belonging to the family, could not partake of it, but was bound to eat it in his own dwelling and with his own family. It was this absence of all domestic social ties between the hired servant and his employer that probably led to the remark: "The hireling fleeth, because he *is an hireling*, and careth not for the sheep."—*John* x, 18.

The parable of the laborers in the vineyard illustrates both the law and the relation of the hireling to the master. The laborers were found standing in the market place. They agreed to work for certain wages, and at night received their wages and were dismissed.

DOMESTIC SERVANTS.

These were domesticated in the family of their employer for a term of years. They formed part of the family, and, in contradistinction from hired servants, were admitted to the paschal supper, jointly with the master, mistress, and children; while not a friend or neighbor could be invited as a guest. The very intimate incorporation of the domestic servant into the family of the master, is incidentally shown in the rule respecting holy flesh. This flesh was such parts of the sacrificial victims as were the perquisites of the priests, and none might eat of it but a priest and the members of his family. The married daughter of a priest, unless her husband was a priest, could not eat of it, because she was no longer a member of a priest's family. So also the *hired* servant was forbidden to eat of it; but to the domestic servant, the servant bought with money, was accorded a privilege denied to his master's married daughter.—*Lev.* xxii, 10—13.

These domestic servants were both Hebrews and foreigners. For reasons which will appear hereafter, we shall at present confine our remarks to the first class; but we beg the reader to bear in mind that there are not two distinct codes respecting the two classes. Many of the laws in relation to domestic servitude are general in their terms; while others, apparently limited to Hebrew servants, are by a general statute extended to foreign servants.

HEBREW DOMESTIC SERVANTS.

The first question that presents itself in regard to these servants is, Was their service voluntary or compulsory? The laws of Moses authorized no compulsory labor *in payment of debt.* We indeed find a woman complaining to Elisha that her husband was dead, and "the creditor has come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen."—*II Kings* iv, 1. It is the conceit of the translators that these sons were to be seized and held as "bondmen"—slaves—and were perhaps to be sent to market to pay the debt of their deceased father. It would seem, from the complaint of the woman, that in the idolatrous kingdom of Israel, about six hundred years after the giving of the law, and during the reign of the profligate son of the impious Ahab, a creditor was entitled to the labor of the sons to satisfy a debt left by their father. To what extent this claim on the children of a debtor was carried, we know not; but whatever was the claim, it had no foundation in the laws of Moses.

Servitude as *a punishment for crime* was unknown to the Mosaic code. In case of theft, the party robbed was, under certain circumstances, entitled to a large compensation, to be paid by the thief. But possibly the thief might be unable to pay the penalty. The case is provided for: "*If* he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft."—*Ex* xxii, 3. He shall forfeit his time and labor for the benefit of the party he had wronged. But the service of this thief was not unlimited, nor was he converted into a chattel. His case was governed by the general law: "If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve, and in the seventh year he shall go out free."—*Ex.* xxi, 2. Of course, the thief could not be sold for a longer term; and it is to be presumed that he was to be sold for as short a term less than six years as would satisfy the legal claims of the person robbed. It is very obvious that sales under this statute would necessarily be few in number, and would furnish a very inadequate and a very unsatisfactory supply of servants.

The other and general source of domestic servants was what in Scripture phraseology is called BUYING AND SELLING. These purchases were in several respects regulated by law. The statute just quoted fixes the term of service. "If thou buy a Hebrew servant, *six years shall he serve.*" Servants were not to be received in and incorporated with the family (except in a particular case, to be hereafter noticed) for a longer period, nor were purchases to be made for a shorter one. The law proceeds: "In the seventh year he shall go out free." Thus it appears that a sale for six years *insured the freedom of the servant after that term.* Who, in this case, was the seller? It is evident he could not have been a former purchaser of the man sold, since a man once sold became free at the end of six years. Of course, he could not be held as property after the expiration of that term. Was the seller a father virtually binding out his child for six years? This cannot be, for the law supposes the servant may be a married man, and may be sold together with his wife.—*Ex.* xxi 3. Was the servant, then, the slave of the seller, having been born his chattel? This seems utterly impossible, not only because there is no law authorizing such a state of servitude, no mode pointed out whereby one descendant of Abraham might lawfully become the hereditary chattel of another, but also because every fiftieth year servitude of every form terminated, and all the inhabitants of the land were declared to be free; and also because, at the Jubilee, all recovered the family inheritance if it had been alienated, and every Jew was a freeholder in possession or expectancy.

The cause assigned for the sale throws light on the condition of the person sold: "If thy brother that dwelleth by thee be *waxen poor*, and be sold unto thee."—*Lev.* xxv, 39. Hence, the man sold was not an hereditary chattel, *incapable of waxing poor*, but a freeman who had lost his property. Now, who sold this poor freeman? The question is caused solely by the perversity of the translators. Their theory of Jewish Slavery induced them to render *be sold*, the identical word which, in the 47th verse, they translated "sell himself." These two verses, fairly translated as they are in the Vulgate, remove all doubt as to the seller in question. "If thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and *sell himself unto thee*," &c. "And if a sojourner or a stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother that dwelleth by him be waxen poor, and *sell himself* unto the stranger or sojourner." Thus we find that the sale of a Jew, whether to one of his own people or to a foreigner, was a voluntary act. The word *sell*, as thus used, is not according to our idiom, and would be better expressed by *hire*; but when thus fairly rendered, no serious misconception can result from its use.

The domestic differed from the *hired* servant in becoming one of his employer's family, and partaking in the religious rites of the household; but there was still another important and marked difference. The hired servant received his wages *after* his stipulated service had been performed, but the domestic received his wages *in advance.* The contract, as we have already seen, was necessarily for six years. But a provision, as merciful as it is extraordinary, was made, by which the servant could, under certain circumstances, dissolve the contract; and the *mode* of doing this incidentally reveals the fact that he received his wages at the time the contract was made. "If a sojourner or a stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother that dwelleth by him wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger and sojourner by thee, or to the stock of the stranger's family, after that he is sold he may *be redeemed again.* One of his brethren may redeem him; or, if he be able, he may *redeem himself.* And he shall reckon with him that bought him, from the year that he was sold to him unto the year of Jubilee; and the price of his sale (that is, his sale back to himself) shall be according unto the number of years—according to the time of a hired servant shall it be with him. If there be many years behind, according unto them he shall give *again* the price of his redemption, *out of the money that he was bought for*"—*Lev* xxv, 47—51.

Thus we find the servant might at any time be *redeemed*, discharged from service, on returning to the master the *unearned wages* he had received. But if the servant was not able to refund, any of his brethren might