to do everything in his power to render the exiſtence of that being happy both in the preſent life and in that which is to come. If this duty be conſcientiouſly diſcharged, the parent has a manifeſt right to the grati­tude, love, and reaſonable obedience, of his child ; but he cannot, in consequence of any duty performed, claim a right to transfer that child as property to the uncon­trolled diſpoſal of any private master ; for this plain reaſon, that the man who is conſidered as the private property of another, cannot reaſonably be ſuppoſed to enjoy happineſs in this world, and is under many temp­tations to do what muſt neceſſarily render him miſerable in the next. See Moral Philosophy, n⁰ 138.

If criminals cannot be lawfully reduced to a ſtate of abſolute private slavery, much leſs ſurely can it be lawful to reducc insolvent debtors and priſoners of war co that ſtate. Many a virtuous man, who has contracted debts with the fairest proſpcct of paying them, has been ſuddenly rendered inſolvent by fire, by ſhipwreck, or by the bankruptcy of others with whom he was neceſſarily engaged in the courſe of his trade. Such a man can be conſidered in no reſpect as criminal. He has been in­deed unfortunate ; but it would be grossly unjuſt, as well as ſhockingly cruel, to add to his misfortune by re­ducing him to a ſtate to which we have juſt ſeen that the vileſt felon cannot be reduced without a violation of the laws of morality. Fraudulent bankrupts indeed, of whom we daily ſee many, might with great propriety and the ſtricteſt justice be compelled to extenuate their debts by labouring for the benefit of thoſe whom they have injured ; and criminals of other deſcriptions might be made to work for the benefit of the public : but in both cafes the taste to be performed ſhould be aſcertained by the law, and the perſons of the labourers be pro­tected by the ſtate. lf ſuch can be called slaves, their slavery is undoubtedly confident with every principle of virtuc and religion ; for they ſuffer nothing but the due reward of their deeds. Priſoners of war, however, can upon no honeſt principle be reduced even to this ſtate of mitigated bondage ; tor they are ſo far from incurring guilt by fighting for their country, that even to their enemies their courage and conduct in ſuch a cauſe muſt appear worthy of reward. A victorious general has certainly a right to prevent the prhoners taken in battle from again drawing their ſwords against him during the continuance of the war ; but there are many ways by which this, may be done effectually without chaining the unfortunate captives to the oar, or selling them like cattle to private purchaſers, by whom they may be treat­ed with capricious cruelty, and driven to the perpetra­tion of the greateſt crimes.

To theſe concluſions, and the reaſoning on which they are built, we are aware it may be objected, that if private ſlavery were in every inſtance unlawful and in- conſistent with the fundamental principles of morality, it would not have prevailed among the ancient patri­archs, and far leſs have been authoriſed by the Jewiſh law.

In reply to this objection, it may be obſerved, that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, though excellent men, were not characters abſolutely perfect ; that as their practice does not authoriſe polygamy or inceſt among us, it will not authoriſe the reducing of our fellow-creatures to a ſtate of hopeleſs ſervitude; and that from the circumſtances of the age in which they lived, many things

were permitted to them, and were indeed harmleſs, which are forbidden to us, and would now be perni­cious. The character oſ Abraham appears to have been much more perfect than that of his ſon or grandſon ; and was certainly equal, if not ſuperior, to that of any ether mere man of whom we read either in profane or even in ſacred hiſtory. We are to remember, however, that he was born amidſt idolaters, and was probably an idolater himſelf till enlightened by the inſpiration of Je­hovah, and called from his kindred and from his fa­ther’s houſe. Before his converſion, he muſt have had much cattle and many ſlaves, which conſtituted the riches of that early period ; and his caſe would indeed have been peculiarly hard, had he been commanded to diveſt himſelf of his ſervants, and to depart into a ſtrange country very thinly inhabited, without people to pro­tect his flocks and herds from beaſts of prey. Nor would his loſs have contributed in any degree to the benefit of his ſlaves, who, as the ranks of men were then adjuſted, could not long have preſerved their liberty. Had they not been forcibly reduced to their former ſtate by their idolatrous countrymen, which in all pro­bability they would have been, they muſt have ſoon submitted to it, or periſhed by hunger. Let it be remem­bered, too, that the bond-ſervants of Abraham, though conſtituting the moſt valuable part of his property, were not conſidered as a ſpecies of inferior beings, but were treated rather as childeren than as ſlaves. This is evi­dent from his ſpeaking of the ſteward of his houſe as his heir, when complaining to God of the want of ſeed. Indeed the manner in which this circumſtance is men­tioned, ſhows that it was then the general practice to conſider domeſtic ſlaves as members of the family ; for the patriarch does not ſay, “ I will leave my ſubſtance to this Eliezer of Damaſcus;” but his words are, “ Be­hold to me thou haſt given no ſeed; and, lo! one born in my houſe is *my* heir @@\*. From this mode of expreſſion we are ſtrongly inclined to think that captives taken in war were in that age of ſimplicity incorporated into the family or tribe of the conqueror, as they are ſaid to be at preſent among the North American Indians, to ſupply the place of thoſe who had fallen in battle. If ſo, ſlavery was then a very mild thing, unattended with the evils which are now in its train, and muſt often have been highly beneficial to the captive.

The other part of the objection appears at firſt sight more formidable : but perhaps a little attention to the deſign of the Moſaic economy may enable us to remove it even more completely than this. We need not in­form our theological readers, that one great purpoſe for which the poſterity of Abraham were ſeparated from the heathen nations around them, was to preſerve the knowledge of the true God in a world run head­long into idolatry. As idolatry appears to have had ſomething in its forms of worſhip extremely captivating to rude minds, and as the minds of the Iſraelites at the era of their departure from Egypt were exceedingly rude, every method was taken to keep their ſeparation from their idolatrous neighbours as complete as poſ­ſible. With this view they were commanded to sacrifice the animals which their Egyptian maſters had worſhipped as gods, and were taught to conſider hogs and ſuch other creatures as the heathen offered in ſacrifice, when celebrating their myſtical and magic rites, as too unclean to be eaten or even to be touched. Of this di-

@@@[m]\* Gen. xv. 3.