

The Rev. James Pennington of New York (a coloured gentleman), delivered his second lecture on American Slavery on the evening of Thursday week in Queen Street Hall, Edinburgh, which was well filled by a highly respectable audience. The lecturer commenced by showing at considerable length the sinfulness of American slavery. He first viewed it as a system of theft, remarking that his own grandfather and father were stolen as slaves, and that he himself was born a slave in the State of Maryland. He contended that every slaveholder held to his slaves the relation of a thief, and adduced the Bible in proof of that averment. In the first epistle to Timothy, there was a catalogue of bad characters recorded, and 'man-stealers' were among the number. When the question came to be discussed some time ago among a body of Christian men in America as to what Paul meant in the passage referred to, the opinion was, and the vote recorded was, that he was a man-stealer who held his fellow-man in slavery. That interpretation he (Mr. P.) had no doubt whatever was correct, and was an interpretation in which all must agree who look at the question in an impartial light. He (Mr. P.) next charged slavery with being a system of murder. God gave to mankind generally an average life of thirty years, so that to every century there were three generations. But in the slave states there are five generations in the century. At the very lowest estimate, there was one-third taken off the life of every slave in consequence of the barbarous treatment to which they were subjected. Could anything, he would ask, be more literally murder than that which wilfully and wantonly reduced a man's life from thirty to twenty years? Was it not murder to take a man's life and send him to his grave before his time? (Cheers.) A class of men cut short the lives of their fellow-creatures ten, twelve, or fifteen years

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sooner than it was God's intention they should be cut off. Was that not murder? (Hear, hear) Again, he (Mr. P.) charged slavery with being a system of vile corruption. The system which robbed a man of his wife, without letting him know what had become of her, tempted that man to become a bigamist. The foulest transactions took place in a state of slavery. He could lay his hands on American documents which he would be ashamed to read in his private study, and much less could he read them to such an audience as that now before him. The most rugged and filthy facts were continually presenting themselves, showing the whole system to be characterised by the grossest immorality and debauchery. The lecturer next looked at the Bible view of the question, and especially dwelt on the epistle to Philemon, which was often relied upon to prove that Paul sent back a fugitive slave. On this epistle he remarked, that it was singular that Onesimus should have gone to Paul, knowing that he was the friend of his master Philemon. Had Onesimus been, as was often attempted to be proved, a slave, Paul was the most unlikely man of any that he would have gone to. But, moreover, the epistle represents Onesimus as a debtor. Now, no slave is ever a debtor. All that he has is his master's, and that to him (Mr. P.) seemed a most serious objection to the idea of Onesimus being a slave. Again, Onesimus was presented as being to Philemon a 'brother in the flesh,' a 'brother beloved,'—very unlike the terms which would have been used had he been a fugitive slave. Lastly, Onesimus was sent as a delegate along with another on an ecclesiastical mission to a neighbouring church, and it was needless to say that in such a capacity slaves were never sent now-a-days at least. It

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was averred by the upholders of slavery, that the apostles received slaveholders into the Christian church. Now, to his mind that had never been made clear; it was not at all likely that the apostles would sanction any such practice. It was likely, however, that men had been received into the fellowship of the church, who had been slaveholders. The moment they were so received, the relationship of master and servant was broken up. In the same way a man may have been a drunkard, but so soon as he is received into the church, it is a token that drunkenness was not a sin which could be brought against him. He had given up his drunken habits. (Hear.) Such reasoning had certainly the merit of being in accordance with the genius of Christianity. It was calculated that there were at present 250,000 slaveholders, each being the owner of an average of thirty slaves, which exhibited the great prevalence of the evil. Of the 250,000 it was believed that 20,000 were professors of Christianity. He would not say that these men were not Christians; but, to his mind, none of them could produce satisfactory evidence of their being true followers of Christ. He would consider that if they were in reality what they profess to be, they ought not to hesitate to let the oppressed go free. (Hear, hear, and applause.) He regarded slaveholding as a heresy in every professor of religion, and whoever held a man as property must virtually deny the immortality of that man's soul. The Christian church gained nothing but lost much by its connection with such a system as that. The church, it was true, gained 20,000 professors of Christianity. But what of that? These men were so much dead-weight, so many stumbling-blocks in the way of the sincere Christian. (Applause.) If it was true as some asserted, that the principle of slaveholding was to be found in the New Testament, the advo-

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cates of the system should be careful of what they were about, because the principle would cut two ways. They were as liable to be slaves as the negroes. (Applause.) No man was safe—the minority was at the mercy of the majority. The grand question was, would any one whom he was addressing like to be a slave? If not, then let every one aid in extirpating the evil. (Applause.)

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